COMMUNITY BROADCASTING DATABASE: SURVEY OF THE COMMUNITY RADIO SECTOR

2005–06 FINANCIAL PERIOD

PUBLIC RELEASE REPORT

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Community Broadcasting Association of Australia
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Introduction

This report provides a summary of data collected by the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBAA) from community radio broadcasting licensees that were fully licensed and operating at 30 June 2006. The statistics do not cover the operations of temporary community broadcasting licensees, or of Remote Indigenous Broadcasting Services (RIBS) and community television stations, which will be separately surveyed. The data was collected between March and June 2007 using an online survey under the CBOnline Community Broadcast Database project (CBD).

This is the fourth CBD data collection to be undertaken. Previous data collections were held in 2003, 2004 and 2005. The surveys were funded by the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts (DCITA) through the Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF).

This report provides an overview of information collected on key aspects of the community radio broadcasting sector, and includes details about sector growth, programming, volunteers and staff, training, subscribers and donors, sponsorship, technical resources and finances for the 2005-06 financial year, and some comparisons with data from the previous collections. It also provides a description of the CBOnline Database project, the survey methodology and how the data was analysed.

Overview of the community broadcasting sector

Australia boasts one of the most long-standing and vibrant community broadcasting sectors in the world, emerging from grass-roots action in the early 1970s to become an important and distinctive part of Australian media as one of several broadcasting sectors – national (ABC and SBS), commercial, subscription and community.

Legislated under the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992*, and guided by the Codes of Practice[1], community broadcast stations are operated as independent not-for-profit organisations which actively encourage access and participation by members of their communities in all aspects of broadcast operations; emphasise the provision of access to groups that are inadequately served by mainstream media; enhance the diversity of programming choices and viewpoints available to their audiences; and support and develop local and Australian arts, music and culture.

Community stations vary enormously, from licence to licence, depending on the needs and interests of the local geographic communities and/or the specific communities of interest they serve – including youth, senior citizens, arts, fine music, Australian music, sport and other specialist interests, as well as providing specific services for Indigenous, religious, print disabled and ethnic communities. There are stations all over the country, some with metropolitan wide licences (18%), others that service particular areas of a city that hold sub-metro or suburban licences (15%), and those in regional (41%) and rural areas (26%)[2].

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[1] Community Broadcasting Association of Australia*, Radio and Television - Codes of Practice*, available from <http://www.cbaa.org.au/content.php/16.html>.

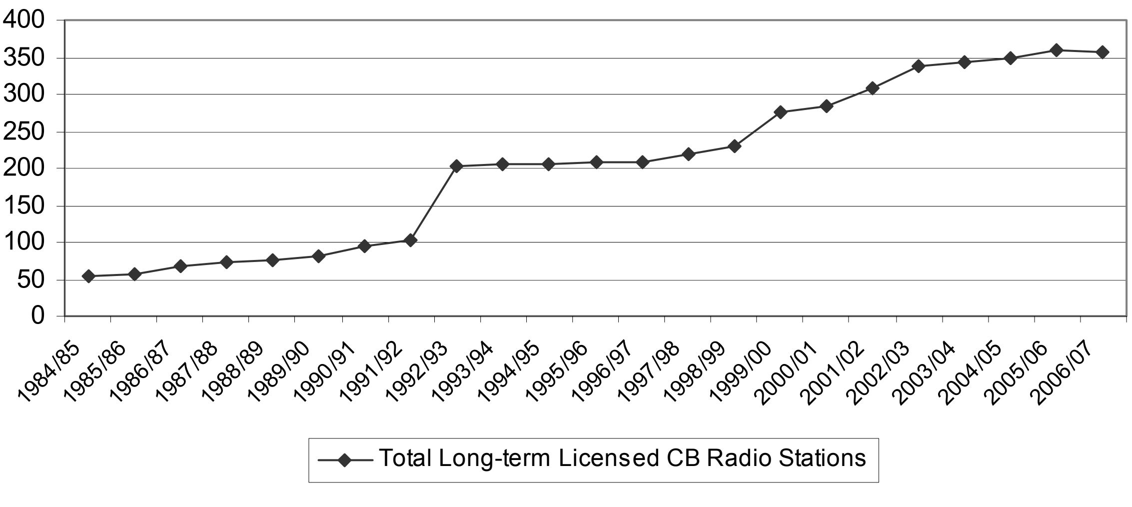
[2] Station percentages refer to the 285 fully licensed and operating community radio stations at June 30 2006, as represented by the current Database results. They do not include Remote Indigenous Broadcast Services licensees, stations with temporary radio licences, or community television stations.

The diversity of program content and emphasis on minority access exhibited by most community broadcasting stations prevents the development of mass audiences; however, recent research indicates that collectively the sector has significant audience reach. According to the 2007 McNair Community Radio National Listener Survey, in an average month 47% of Australians over 15 years of age listen to community radio – an estimated audience of 7.5 million people[3].

A recent national qualitative study into sector audiences by Griffith University found that people tuning into metropolitan and regional community radio stations valued the provision of local news and information, and appreciated the diversity of programming including that of specialist music formats. The report showed that audiences liked the laid back, 'ordinary person' station presentation style and perceived community radio to be accessible and approachable[4].

Community broadcasting has experienced a period of sustained growth since its inception over three decades ago, with the number of stations trebling since the early nineties. In 2007, there are 358[5] fully licensed community radio stations, (including those servicing remote Indigenous areas) and 44[6] temporary community radio broadcasting licences; plus 84[7] community television broadcasting licensees including permanent community television licences in four capital cities, two trial TV licences, and 80 TV licences for remote Indigenous broadcasting services.

Community radio stations - sector growth 1984 to 2007



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[3] McNair Ingenuity, *Community Radio National Listener Survey*, August 2006. This report is available from the CBOnline website: <http://www.cbonline.org.au/index.cfm?pageId=44,0,1,0>

[4] Michael Meadows, Susan Forde, Jacqui Ewart & Kerry Foxwell, *Community Media Matters: An Audience Study of the Australian Community Broadcasting Sector,* Griffith University Press, March 2007. This report is available from the CBOnline website: < http://www.cbonline.org.au/index.cfm?pageId=51,0,1,0

[5] Australian Communications and Media Authority, *Australian Communications and Media Authority Annual Report 2006-07,* 2007.

[6] Australian Communications and Media Authority, *LIC027 Current Temporary Community Broadcasting Licences,* 11 October, 2007.

[7] Australian Communications and Media Authority, *LIC032 Community TV Broadcasting Licences,* 4 October, 2007.

Background to the CBOnline Database project

The aim of the CBOnline Database project is to provide accurate and reliable statistical information on the operations of community broadcasting stations for use by the sector in planning and promoting its activities, and preparing reports to government.

Information was collected for the Database for the first time in 2003 for the 2001-02 financial year. Three collections have taken place since then: in 2004 for the 2002-03 financial year; 2005 for the 2003-04 financial period; and now, in 2007, for the 2005-06 financial period.

Because the first collection employed different data gathering and analysis strategies than the subsequent collections, data trends reported here are based on comparisons between the 2002-03, 2003-04 and the 2005-06 collections only.

Reports on previous collections are available on the CBOnline website (go to www.cbonline.org.au, > *Statistics* > *Previous Years*).

Survey approach

The survey data was collected using an online interface hosted on the administrative area of the CBOnline website. Stations eligible to take part in the survey were allocated a user name and password to access the survey questionnaire.

Eligible stations were defined as those holding both a full community radio licence and broadcasting as at 30 June 2006. A total of 252 community radio licensees were surveyed from a pool of 285 eligible stations, of which 166 stations completed a full survey and the remaining 86 stations completed a short survey. Only the full survey results have been included in this report as they offer readers a more comprehensive picture of the sector's activities during the reporting period.

The statistics do not cover the operations of Remote Indigenous Broadcasting Services (RIBS), community television stations[8] or temporary community broadcasting licensees. Nor do the statistics account for the activities of sector-based organisations, such as the Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF), the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBAA), the National Ethnic and Multicultural Broadcasters Council (NEMBC), RPH Australia (Radio for the Print Handicapped), Christian Media Australia (CMA), the Australian Indigenous Communications Association (AICA), the Indigenous Remote Communications Association (IRCA), or state or regionally-based community broadcasting bodies. The table overleaf provides details of the sample strata.

[8] The first CTV survey was undertaken in 2006-7.

2005-06 COMMUNITY BROADCASTING DATABASE																
	Metropolitan			Suburban			Regional			Rural			National			
	Full	Short	Universe	Full	Short	Universe	Full	Short	Universe	Full	Short	Universe	Full	Short	Universe	Full completed
Income>$500	23	0	24	0	0	0	2	0	2	2	0	4	27	0	30	90%
Income<$500	26	0	28	19	21	43	62	42	115	32	22	69	139	85	255	55%
General	14	0	16	17	21	41	32	42	81	20	21	55	83	84	193	43%
Religious	9	0	9	0	0	0	18	0	21	4	0	4	31	0	34	91%
Indigenous (non RIBS)	3	0	4	0	0	0	2	0	2	9	1	13	14	1	19	74%
RPH	7	0	7	0	0	0	7	0	7	1	0	1	15	0	15	100%
Ethnic	6	0	6	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	7	100%
Youth	6	0	6	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	7	0	8	88%
Seniors/Mature Age	0	0	0	1	0	1	4	0	4	0	0	0	5	0	5	100%
Fine Music	4	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	4	100%
TOTAL	**49**	**0**	**52**	**19**	**21**	**43**	**64**	**42**	**117**	**34**	**22**	**73**	**166**	**85**	**285**	**58%**

As the table shows, stations were categorised by service type and geographic location. The service types are general community, ethnic, RPH (radio for print-handicapped), Indigenous, religious, fine music, seniors/mature-age, and youth. The small number of stations representing the gay and lesbian, specialist music and arts communities were included with general community services for statistical purposes. The categories of geographic location were metropolitan, suburban, regional, and rural.

In order to make efficient use of available resources and ensure that the results of the full survey were statistically representative of the sector as a whole, a sample of approximately 40% of stations was randomly drawn from general community stations turning over less than $500k per annum. These stations were distributed disproportionably (a higher sampling fraction was used in smaller universes, and a smaller sampling fraction was used in larger universes) over the four geographic locations. All stations turning over more than $500,000 per annum were asked to complete the full survey to avoid a small station bias.

Similarly, all stations in the specialist service categories (i.e. ethnic, RPH, Indigenous, religious, fine music, seniors/mature age, and youth) were asked to complete a full survey. Stations that declined to participate in the full survey were asked to complete the short survey. The short survey did not include financial questions, as the 2001-02 survey had shown that disclosure of this information was considered too sensitive for a number of licensees.

Data analysis

Following the collection and validation of survey data, sample weights were applied to the data to extrapolate sample estimates to the total population of fully licensed community radio stations across Australia. Weights were based on an assessment of the original selection probabilities as well as non-response outcomes within particular sample strata.

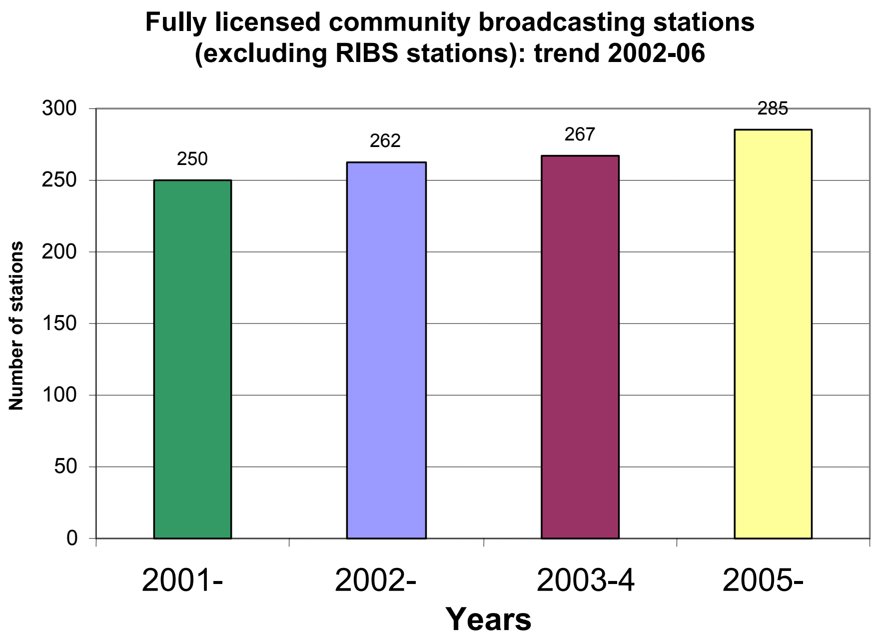
All cells were weighted, with the exception of those pertaining to Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF) grants. For CBF grants, the actual grant amounts were known and no statistical inference was required. An assessment of the data from each of the surveys has indicated that the final weighted results from the full survey have a high degree of statistical correspondence to the short survey results. The use of one dataset also avoids any possible confusion that may arise from the use of the partial dataset (i.e. merged short and full survey results). As already mentioned, only the aggregate results from the full survey are presented in this report.

For more information on the Database or any aspect of the CBOnline project, please contact the CBOnline Content Manager, Wendy Coates, at wcoates@cbonline.org.au.

Main Findings

Sector

The sector continues to grow
The number of fully licensed community radio stations continues to grow steadily, with 285 stations operating in the 2005-06 period. The sector has grown by 14% in the 5 years since the first CBD survey in 2001-02.



During the 2005-06 period, growth was strongest in regional areas with a 22% increase in station numbers (from 95 to116 stations). At the same time there was a 5% decrease in the number of metropolitan stations (from 55 to 52 stations).

The generalist category showed the strongest growth with a 10% increase in station numbers from the previous survey (from 173 to 193 stations), while the number of Indigenous stations decreased by 10%, dropping from 21 to 19 stations.

Programming

Community broadcasters are on-air 24/7
Almost 100% of stations broadcast for 168 hours a week, with a total of 47,831 hours being broadcast weekly across the country.

Reflecting sector expansion, total hours broadcast across the sector increased by 7% since 2003-04 (3,102 more hours per week).

Community radio is increasingly the only source of local content in many areas
Ninety-one stations, or nearly one third (32%) of all community radio broadcasters, were the sole providers of local radio programming in their area. This is an increase of 27 stations operating as solo local content providers. In rural and regional areas the

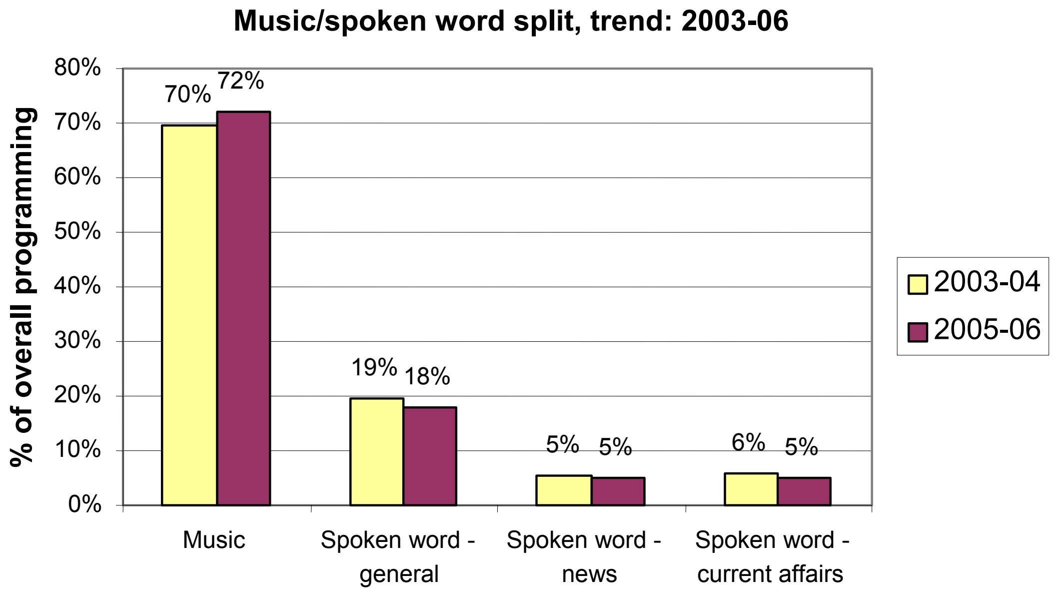
level was higher, with 38% of stations as either the only radio service in their local area or the only source of local content.

During 2005-06, community radio stations broadcast an average of 131 hours of local content in an average week, or 78% of total content (up from 75% in 2003-04). This is significantly higher than the local content obligation for commercial regional radio licensees, to be legislated at three hours a day from January 2008[9].

While the amount of local content broadcast by community radio stations remained high across the sector there was some variation in local content hours across different locations: metropolitan stations broadcast an average of 144 hours (86% of total broadcast hours); suburban stations broadcast an average of 143 hours (85%); and rural and regional stations broadcast an average of 123 hours (73%).

Community broadcasters provide a mix of music and information for the communities they reach.
Music programming accounted for most (72%) of what community broadcasters put to air (a 2% increase on 2003-04).

In conjunction with music, the sector offers a diverse range of information, with 28% of content talks based including general talks programming, news bulletins and current affairs programs.



Almost all stations (99%) broadcast general spoken word programming; 92% of stations broadcast news bulletins; and 80% provided current affairs programming.

The makeup of programming varied considerably between stations serving specialist communities. The national average for general spoken word hours was 30 hours a

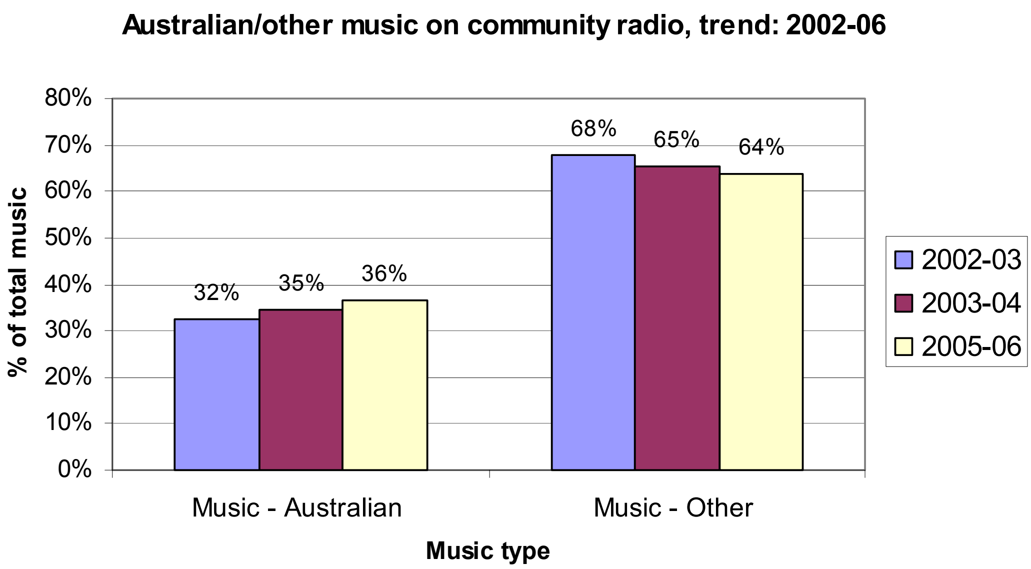
[9] Australian Communications and Media Authority, *Local Content Protections: Rural and Regional Radio*, sourced November 2007 from <http://www.acma.gov.au/WEB/STANDARD/1001/pc=PC_101011 >.

week, while ethnic stations provided 86 hours a week, followed by RPH with 59 hours. The national average for news was 9 hours a week, while RPH provide 46 hours of news, and 57 hours of current affairs (national average for current affairs was 12 hours).

Australian music content on community radio continues to increase
Community broadcasters play a very important role in supporting local talent and developing local culture, exemplified by their strong support for the Australian music industry.

The sector's Code of Practice for radio sets a quota of 25% Australian music with exceptions for ethnic and fine music broadcasters who have a quota of 10%. During the survey period, the sector exceeded its minimum quotas for Australian music reaching an average of 36%, 1% more than for the previous survey period.

The percentage of Australian music played on community radio stations has increased steadily over the last four years: Australian music made up 32% of total music played in 2002-03 period; 35% in the 2003-04 period; and 36% in the current period.



During the 2005-06 period a total of 12,547 hours of Australian music was played weekly on community radio stations, equal to 652,444 hours over the twelve month period. This is 16% more than for previous survey period due largely to growth in the total number of licensed stations.

There were significant increases from the previous period in the average number of hours of Australian music played by stations in particular categories, for example fine music stations increased by 28%; youth stations increased by 12%; and general, religious, and Indigenous stations all increased by 9%.

On a weekly basis, stations broadcast an average of 44 hours of Australian music. Some of the categories exceeded this average, for example Indigenous stations broadcast the most with 65 hours a week, followed by youth stations which broadcast 55 hours.

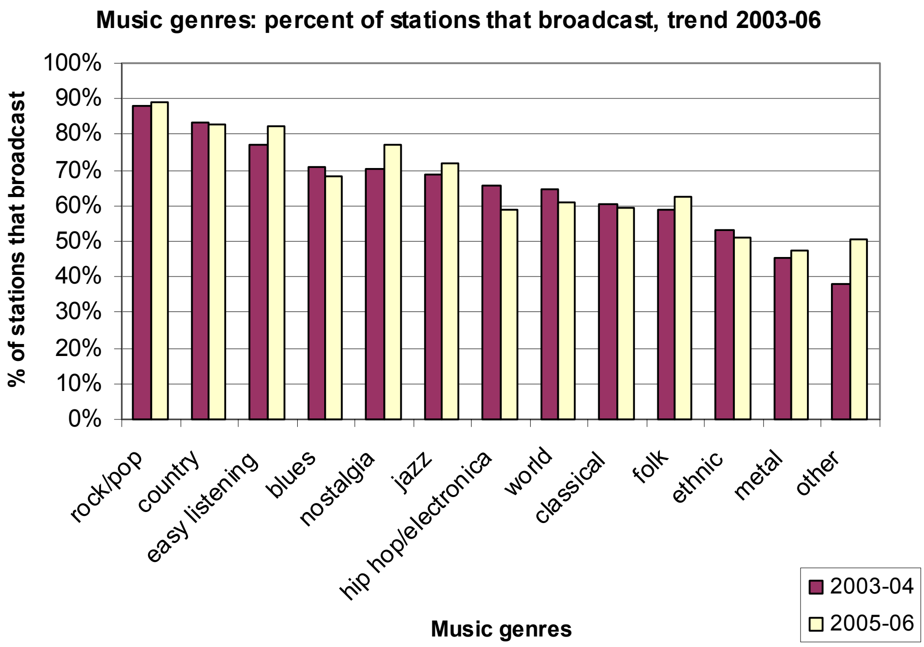
The current data shows that the average hours of Australian music broadcast by community stations increased across all locations; rural and regional areas showed the greatest rise with an increase of 10%.

Community radio services in rural areas played the highest proportion of Australian music - 41% of all music (52 hours weekly); followed by suburban stations - 36% of all music (42 hours weekly); metropolitan stations - 35% of all music (37 hours weekly); and regional stations – 34% of all music (42 hours weekly).

Community broadcasters were also involved in recording Australian music for rebroadcast. Almost a quarter (22%) of community radio stations undertook this activity. During an average week, sector-wide, community broadcasters sourced 234 hours of Australian music in this manner, a 14% decrease on the previous survey period.

Community broadcasters offer a diverse range of music genres or styles
Community radio stations offer a diverse range of music genres and styles. As a proportion of total music broadcast across the sector, the most common genres were easy listening (27%), rock/pop (24%), and country (14 %).

Most stations provided a mix of genres. The figure below shows the proportion of stations that played particular music genres, and provides a comparison with the results from the previous survey period.



The genres shown represent only a portion of those played on community radio stations. For example, the styles included in the 'other' music category ranged from avant-garde, stage and screen, big band and opera to surf punk, emo, industrial, goth-a-billy and trance music. The percentage of stations that identified that they broadcast genres other than those listed increased from 38% the previous year to half (51%) of all community radio stations in the current period.

Indigenous and religious music were categorised as overarching types of music, which are represented across all music genres. In total there were 1,170 hours of Indigenous music and 4,082 hours of religious music played in an average week. Airplay of both these broad music genres was widespread in the community broadcasting sector during the period, with 59% of stations broadcasting Indigenous music (2% increase on the last survey period) and 81% airing religious music (1% increase on previous survey period).

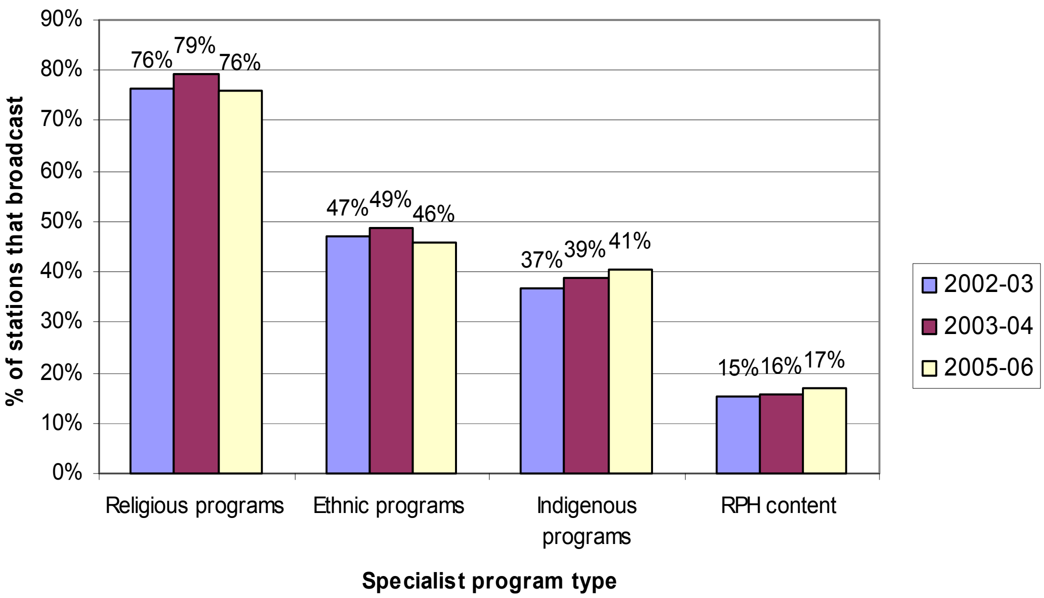
Community broadcasters meet the diverse content needs of minority and specialist interest groups

During the period, 76% of all stations broadcast religious programming (3,339 hours weekly); 46% of all stations broadcast programming aimed at people from non-English speaking backgrounds (a total of 2,439 hours weekly); 41% aired programs aimed at an Indigenous audience (1,411 hours weekly); and 17% put RPH programming to air (1,594 hours weekly).

While religious and ethnic programming are broadcast by the greatest percentage of the stations, since 2002 there has been a steady increase in percentage of stations broadcasting Indigenous and RPH content.

It should be noted that the above figures were influenced by the contributions of stations licensed to serve specific interest groups on a full-time basis. There were 7 ethnic, 15 RPH, 19 Indigenous and 34 religious stations operating with full licences during the period. On the other hand, the percentage of stations broadcasting Indigenous programming, and the number of hours broadcast, would have been significantly higher had the 80[10]Indigenous Remote community radio licensees been involved in the survey**.**

Specialist programming, stations that broadcast, trend: 2002-06

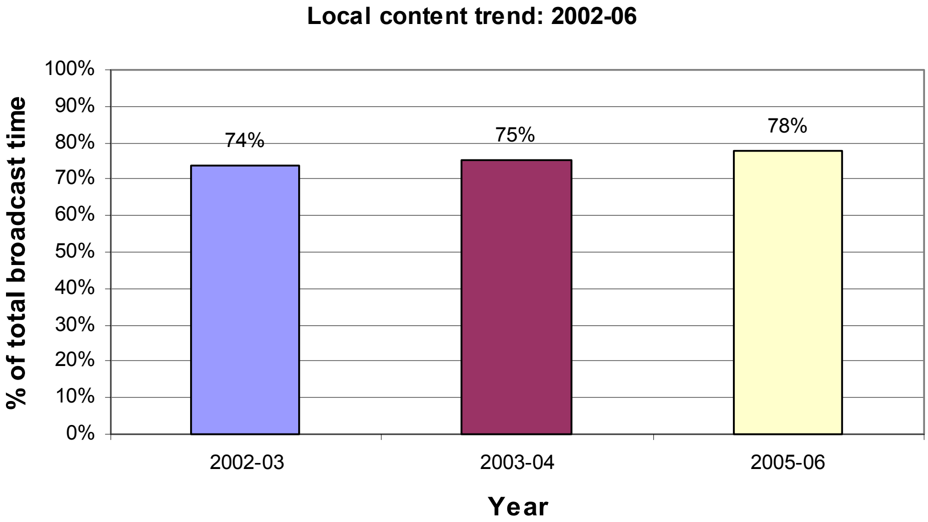


[10] Australian Communications and Media Authority, Ex BRACS Radio and Television Licences, 1 May 2006

Community radio increasingly relevant as local content producer
During the 2005-06 period, on a weekly basis, the Australian community radio sector produced a total of 37,255 hours of local content[11]. This is 3,361 more hours a week than for the previous survey period.

Over the 12 month period, the sector produced a total 1,937,263 hours of local programming, 10% more than for the previous survey period.

Across the sector, stations locally produced 78% of the programming they broadcast, continuing a trend for steady increase in local production (up from 74% in 2002-03, and 75% in 2003-04).



Metropolitan and suburban stations continue to broadcast the highest level of locally produced content at 86% and 85% of total content respectively, while regional stations broadcast 77%, and rural stations 69%.

Youth and Fine Music stations had the highest proportion of locally originated content, comprising 97% of broadcast hours, followed by stations that target senior or mature age audiences with 94%.

Satellite services play an important role
A significant amount of the remainder of programming aired during the period came from the sector's three satellite services, Community Radio Network (12%), the National Indigenous Radio Service-NIRS (1%), and the RPH satellite (2%).

A further 2% of content came from other national satellite services or program networks including CAAMA and PAKAM (providers of Indigenous programming in remote regions), the Vision Radio Network (Brisbane-based Christian programming service), plus a small proportion from Austereo, Sky and Southern Cross Broadcasting (commercial media networks). A further 5% of broadcast content came from international satellite services, including the BBC and Germany's Deutsche Welle.

[11] Local content refers to programming produced at a station for its local audience. This does not include content taken from a satellite service or produced by another station.

In all, 81% of the sector, or 231 stations, accessed satellite services of some type, broadcasting an average of 46 hours of satellite-sourced content a week (1 hour less than for previous survey period).

Station use of satellite services was influenced by station location, with rural stations making highest use of the service - broadcasting an average of 61 hours a week; followed by regional stations with an average of 46. Suburban and metropolitan stations, on the other hand, used these services less, averaging 32 hours.

Volunteers and Staff

Volunteers are at the core of community broadcasting.
A total of 20,751 people worked voluntarily at fully licensed community radio stations during the 2005-06 financial year, an increase of 3% since the previous survey period. This does not take into account the number of people who volunteered their time at stations with temporary community radio licensees or those who worked in a volunteer capacity at community television stations.

Most stations (99%) had at least one volunteer and a small number had in excess of 400, and the highest was over 600.

While the sector average was 74 volunteers per station, the ethnic, fine music and youth categories had the highest number of volunteers, with station averages of 306, 211 and 168 respectively.

Although Indigenous stations had the smallest number of volunteers per station (25), they experienced the greatest growth in volunteer numbers, with a 35% increase on 2003-04 volunteer numbers.

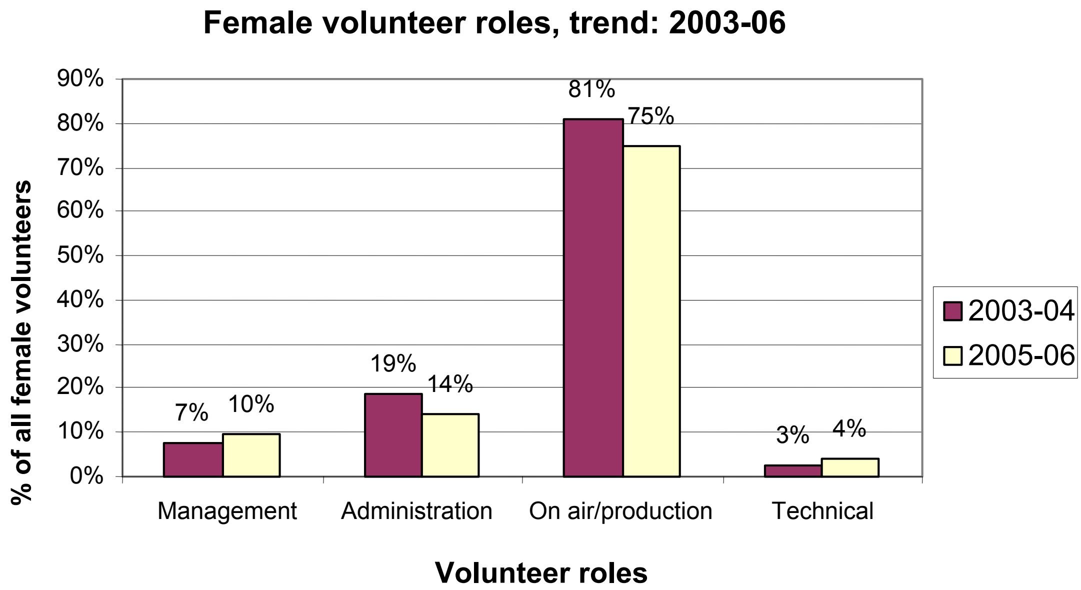
Station location and associated population density was a significant factor influencing volunteer numbers: metropolitan stations having the highest average with 185 volunteers; followed by suburban stations with 86; regional stations with 48; and rural stations with 30. Of the different locations, metropolitan stations recorded the greatest growth in volunteer numbers, increasing 10% from the previous survey period.

Gender imbalance toward male volunteers
A gender imbalance continues to be evident among community broadcasting volunteers, with 57% of all volunteers being male, and 43% female.

The gender imbalance increased slightly over the 2005-06 period, with a 3% increase in the total number of male volunteers, while the total number of female volunteers remained stable.

RPH was the only category to have more female than male volunteers, where females comprised on average 60% of volunteers at each station.

The majority of female volunteers continue to be involved in on-air presentation and administration roles; however, the proportion of females in these roles decreased by 6% and 5% respectively since the previous survey period. At the same time, there were small increases in the proportion of female volunteers working in management roles.



Note: Some volunteers act in a number of roles, so the percentages do not always sum to 100

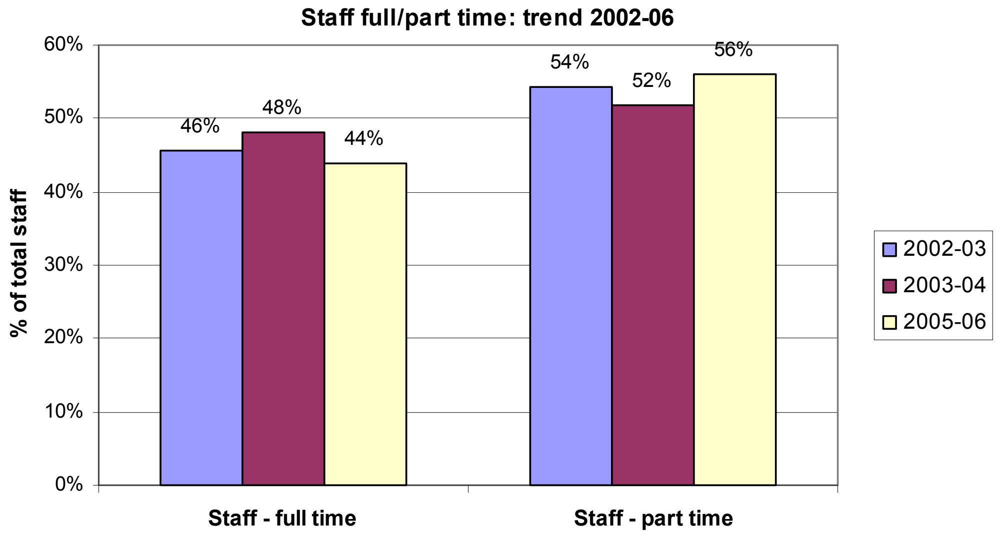
A significant amount of young people are involved in the sector.
Similar to the previous survey period, 90% of stations had volunteers under the age of 26, with an average of 17 volunteers under the age of 26 per station.

As expected, younger volunteers were most numerous at youth stations - averaging 140, followed by ethnic stations with an average of 50 per station.

Youth participation varied according to station location, with the highest levels occurring at metropolitan stations where an average of 48 volunteers were under the age of 26, whereas suburban stations averaged 13, and both regional and rural stations averaged 9.

Youth volunteers made up a higher proportion of total volunteers at rural stations where 31% of volunteers were under the age of 26, followed by metropolitan stations with 26%, regional stations with 19%, and suburban stations with 15%.

Staff numbers down this period
Despite the sector's emphasis on volunteerism, a significant number of people were employed at stations. A total of 848 people worked on either a full or part-time basis during the period. This was however 5% fewer people than for the previous survey.



The total number of effective full time (EFT) staff employed by the sector also decreased, falling 9% to 534, reversing an increase recorded by the 2003-04 survey.

The percentage of stations that employed at least one staff member also decreased, with 58% of stations employing staff, whereas during 2003-04 63% of stations employed staff.

Slightly more than half the staff were employed on a part-time basis (56%). During the survey period this increased by 4%, countering previous trend for increasing levels of full-time employment.

While staff numbers were down for the sector overall, a number of categories experienced an expansion in staff numbers. Notable were youth stations which increased the total number of effective full time staff by 46%, followed by print disabled (increase of 20%), and ethnic (increase by10%).

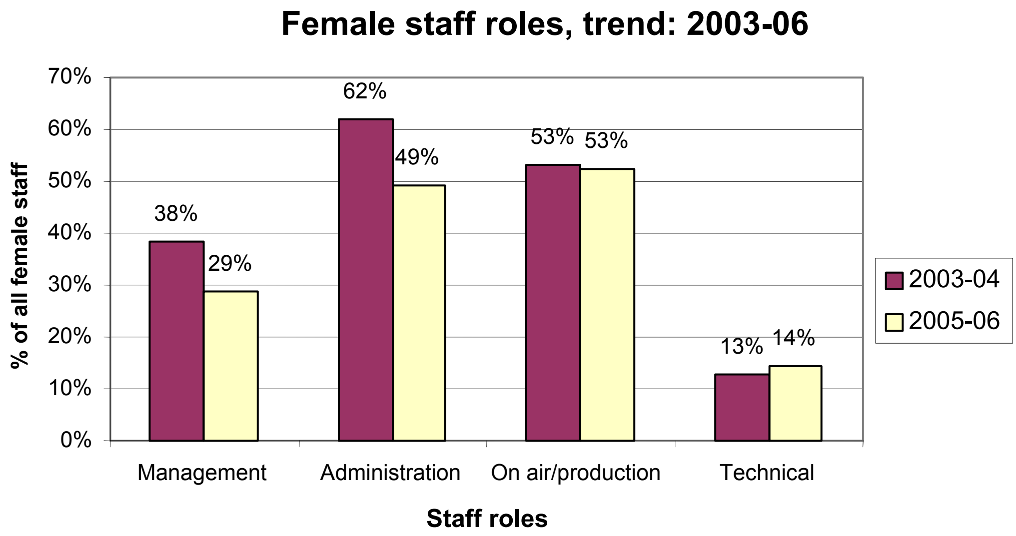
Staff gender gap is closing

While there were a higher proportion of males employed as staff within the sector, the gap between the genders is decreasing. The proportion of female staff increased 3% during the 2005-06 survey period. Since 2002 the proportion of women in staff positions has increased by 6%.

Across the sector, 379 female staff were employed, 2% more than for the previous survey period.

The most common role for female staff was on/air production (53%), followed by administration (49%).

Compared to the previous survey period, there was a marked reduction in the proportion of female staff working in management (down 9%) and administration roles (down 13%).



Note: Some staff work in a number of roles, so the percentages do not always sum to 100

Training

Most community radio stations provide some form of broadcasting training
The 2005-06 data collection showed that the majority of stations continue to recognise the importance of training, with 85% of stations conducting some form of organised or formal training (5% more than previous survey). Over the course of the year, each station provided training for an average of 29 people.

The number of training hours (accredited and unaccredited) undertaken on a weekly basis increased substantially from the previous survey, whilst the number of people receiving training decreased, suggesting the people are undertaking longer training programs than previously.

A total of 7,071 people received training (accredited and unaccredited) across the community broadcasting sector during 2005-06.

A total of 3,608 hours of organised training (accredited and unaccredited) were undertaken weekly at stations across Australia (70% more than for the previous survey period).

Accredited training hours increase significantly
Accredited training offers the community radio sector the opportunity to establish national standards in training which are recognised by the sector and the rest of the media industry.

Nationally, 1,245 hours of accredited training were delivered every week (on a per person, per hour basis). This was a 172% increase on the total training hours for the previous survey period.

Almost a quarter (22%) of stations participated in accredited training programs (ie training provided by the one of the sector's Registered Training Organisations or a TAFE college).

Nationally, the total number of people who received accredited training for the period was 586. A total of 238 people received accredited training in regional and rural stations, 251 in metropolitan areas, and 97 in suburban stations.

Although in 2005-06 fewer people participated in accredited training across the sector, there was a significant overall increase in the number of hours of accredited training hours delivered during this period [12].

Subscribers and donors

Subscribers provide strong support for community broadcasting
During 2005-06, on average, 18% of station income came from subscriptions, membership fees or donations (same as for the previous survey period) (see following income section for details).

Across the sector, a total of 107,915 people were either subscribers to, or members of, a fully licensed community radio station, 5% less people than for the 2003-04 period. While this represents an average of 409 subscribers per station (down 10% from the previous survey period), it should be noted that the ability of stations to attract subscriptions and/or membership varies substantially across locations due to differences in population density. For instance, the average number of people who subscribed to metropolitan-based stations was 1,490, for suburban stations 304, and for regionally-based stations the figure was 149, while stations in rural areas attracted an average of only 75 subscribers each.

Similarly, the average number of subscribers per station varied considerably across specialist categories. The highest number of subscribers per station was associated with fine music stations (average of 2,662 subscribers), followed by ethnic, youth and seniors stations.

The highest proportion of subscription dollars was collected by religious stations, receiving 10% of the national subscription total.

While Indigenous stations registered the smallest number of subscribers, these stations experienced the highest level of subscriber growth for the survey period, where the average number of subscribers per station almost doubled, from 64 to 126.

Support from donors rises
Donations accounted for 11% of total national income (see income section for details). During 2005-06, 84% of stations received income from donations (up from 71% from previous survey period), and a total of 47,895 people donated money to community broadcasting stations (an increase of 17% on 2003-04).

As with subscribers, the number of donors varied substantially between service areas. Stations with metropolitan-wide licences received donations from the largest number of people, with an average of 794 donors per station; whereas regional stations averaged 84, suburban stations 29, and rural stations 28.

[12] As at 30 June 2006, the National Training Project had only commenced its first phase of financial support for accredited training.

Ethnic stations had the largest number of donors, with an average of 2,648 individuals donating money, followed by the fine music stations with 600.

Religious stations continue to collect the highest proportion of donation dollars receiving 68% of the national donation total.

Sponsorship

Sponsorship capacity important role in financial support
Sponsorship continues to play an important role in station operations, accounting for 41% of the national income (see following income section for details).

Community radio stations broadcast an average of 282 minutes of sponsorship announcements a week (34% of the total number of sponsorship minutes available).

Most stations (99%) broadcast sponsorship announcements during the peak period – between 6am and midnight – averaging 256 minutes per station a week (41% of available sponsorship time during this period).

Fewer stations (38%) broadcast sponsorship messages during the off peak period – between midnight to 6am – averaging 76 minutes a week per station (36% of available sponsorship time during this period).

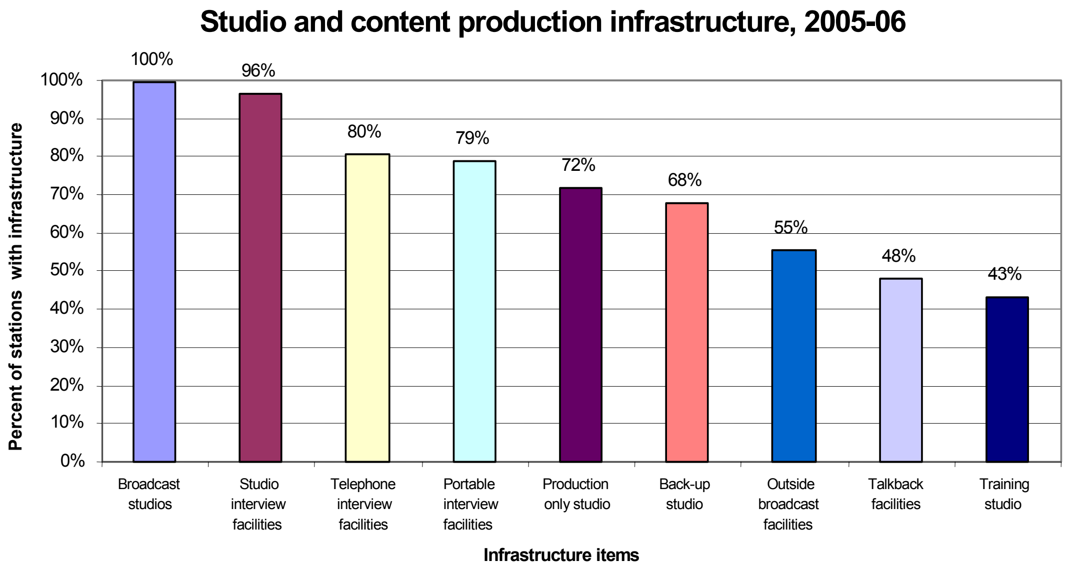
Technical Resources

Studio facilities below benchmark
While almost all community radio stations had a broadcast capable studio, only 68% of stations had a back-up broadcast-capable studio. This means that 32% of stations were operating below the minimum studio infrastructure benchmark of two broadcast capable studios to enable simultaneous broadcast and production. Similarly, while 72% of stations had a studio dedicated to production, 28% of stations operated below the minimum benchmark in this respect.

Many community radio stations without suitable training facilities
Although the number of stations with access to studios for training purposes increased by 9% from 2002-03, 43% of stations were still operating without such facilities.

Stations continue to operate with less than recommended interview facilities
Interviews are a major source of local news and information broadcast on community radio stations; however many stations still fell below minimum benchmarks in respect to these facilities. While almost all stations (96%) had facilities to conduct studio interviews, fewer stations had facilities to conduct telephone interviews (81%), and only 48% of stations had specialised talkback facilities.

Across the sector, 79% of stations had facilities for conducting portable interviews, while 21% were still without this option.



While most community radio stations operated with basic studio equipment such as microphones (99%) and CD players (98%), only 68% were able to put telephone lines to air, only 68% had satellite feeds, and only 63% had minidisk players.

Half the sector does not have outside broadcast facilities

Through outside broadcasts (OBs), stations can actively engage with their communities through on-site coverage of community, sporting and other events. Despite the obvious role for OBs, only just over half of all stations (55%) had OB facilities. Youth, Indigenous, and ethnic stations had the highest levels of such facilities (between 86-88% of these stations OB equipped); while religious stations had the least (33% of stations OB equipped).

To run an OB, audio links are required to connect the OB site to the station. There are various methods of establishing these links, with options expanding as new technologies become available. The most prevalent method used by the sector was the standard phone line with POTS codec (40%), followed by standard phone lines (38%), ISDN with codec (19%), and microwave (13%). Less than 10% of stations use broadband or leased analogue landlines.

Computers are commonly used to assist in administration, production and for audio play-out

Converging broadcast, information and communication technologies have created a new paradigm for media infrastructure over the last two decades. During 2005-06, community radio stations used computers most widely for administration purposes, with 96% of all community radio stations using computers for office functions, however there were still 4% of stations operating without these basic facilities.

Computer technologies were also used extensively for broadcast and production purposes: 93% of stations used a computer for audio production, 97% used computers for play-out of some audio material, and 87% used computers for play-out of all audio material.

Full networking of station computers has been achieved by almost half of all stations (49%), a further 34% have established partial networks, while the remaining 17% still operate their computers as stand-alone units.

Basic Internet connectivity for most stations, but not yet universal
Onsite Internet access is a basic requirement for station communications and program research, however 7% of community radio stations still operate without this facility. Of the 93% that are online, 72% connect to the Internet using an ADSL standard broadband connection, 17% use ADSL2 high speed broadband (half of metropolitan stations access this type of connection), while ADSL2 is used in 5% of rural and 6% of regional stations). A further 9% still use dial-up connections (the majority of these are in regional areas).

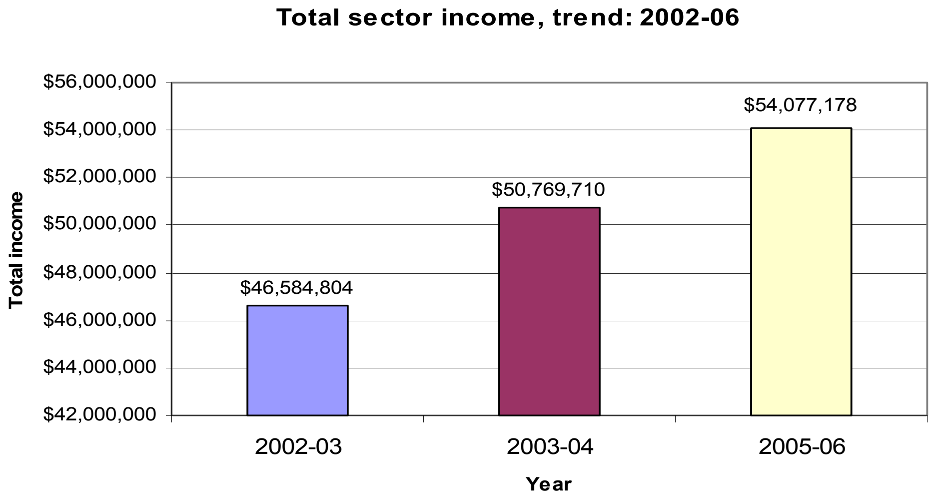
Stations take-up specialist software, but many yet to benefit
Community broadcasters have increased their use of specialist software to manage a range of station operations, although a large proportion of the sector is still to benefit from these programs. The survey showed that 63% of stations used software for music storage and access, 47% used general scheduling software, and only 34% used specialist software to organise sponsorship billing.

1/3 of sector operating with less than adequate reception
Sixty-eight percent of stations operated with transmission facilities that provide reception coverage on par with other broadcasters within their service area, leaving 32% with transmission facilities that are still less than adequate.

Transmitter linking methods
The most common method for linking between stations and their transmitters was analogue microwave link (38% of stations), followed by dedicated leased analogue program line (20%) and digital microwave link (15%). Dedicated leased digital line, ISDN and broadband were also used but to a far lesser degree. A further 19% of stations reported using other linking methods.

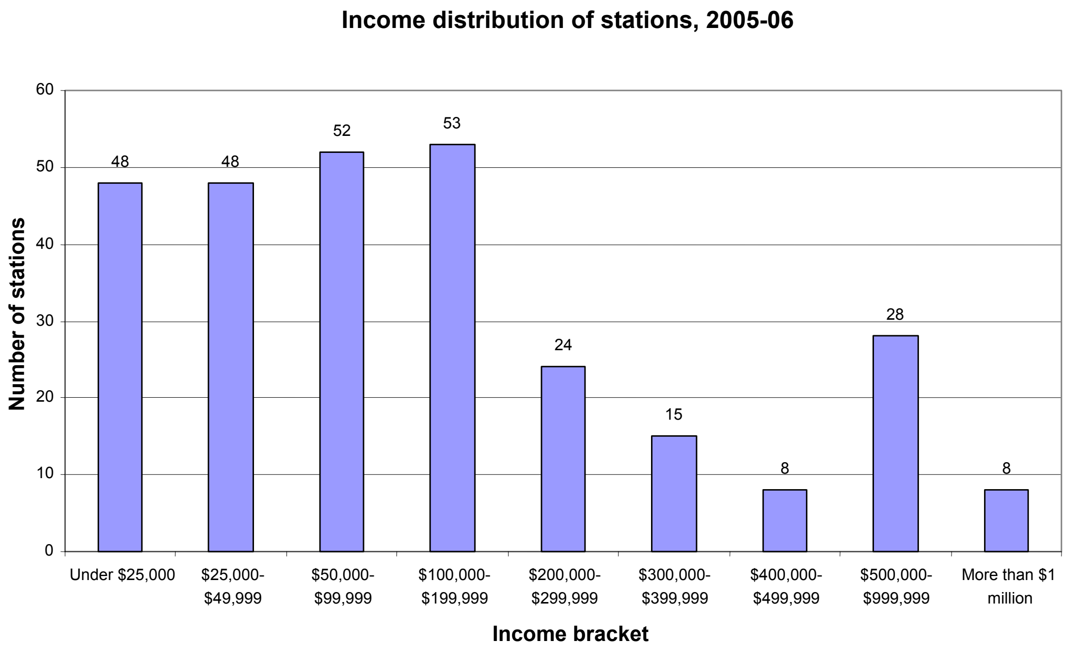
Finances

There was revenue growth in 2005-06
The combined income of all fully licensed radio stations during 2005-06 was $54,007,180, a rise of 7% over the previous year, extending the steady increase since 2002.



Individual station incomes varied widely. At one end of the spectrum there were stations operating on less than $6,000 per annum, while at the other end the turnover of some stations in metropolitan areas exceeded $1.5 million during the period. Therefore, the overall average station income figure of $189,745 can be quite misleading. The median income for the sector was $66,317.00[13].

As the following figure indicates, most community broadcasters had a turnover of less than $100,000, and nearly 20% made under $25,000 per annum.



The average income of stations in rural and regional areas was $110,477, while stations operating with metropolitan-wide licences averaged $566,235 during the period. In the case of stations holding limited metropolitan or suburban licences the

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[13] The median is found by arranging the data values in ascending order and identifying the halfway point.

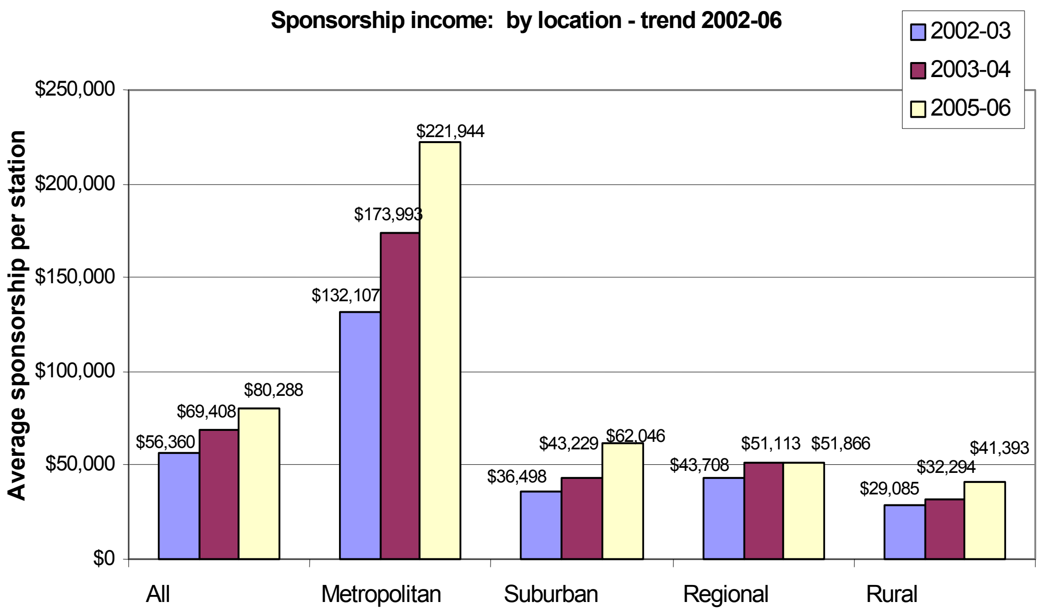
average income was $126,249.

Sponsorship is the largest income item
Sponsorship income accounted for more than a third of the total income for the sector (41%). Nearly all stations (96%) received some sponsorship income.

Overall sponsorship for the sector continues to grow
The sector raised $22,127,263 through sponsorship during the 2005-06 financial period, a 24% increase on the previous survey period and a 50% increase since the 2002-03 period.

The average income per station from sponsorship was $80,288; however, across the sector the income derived from this source varied greatly, from nil to over one million dollars.

Station location plays a significant part in sponsorship potential, with metropolitan stations achieving the highest with an average of $221,944 per station, where as stations in rural areas averaged just $41,393.



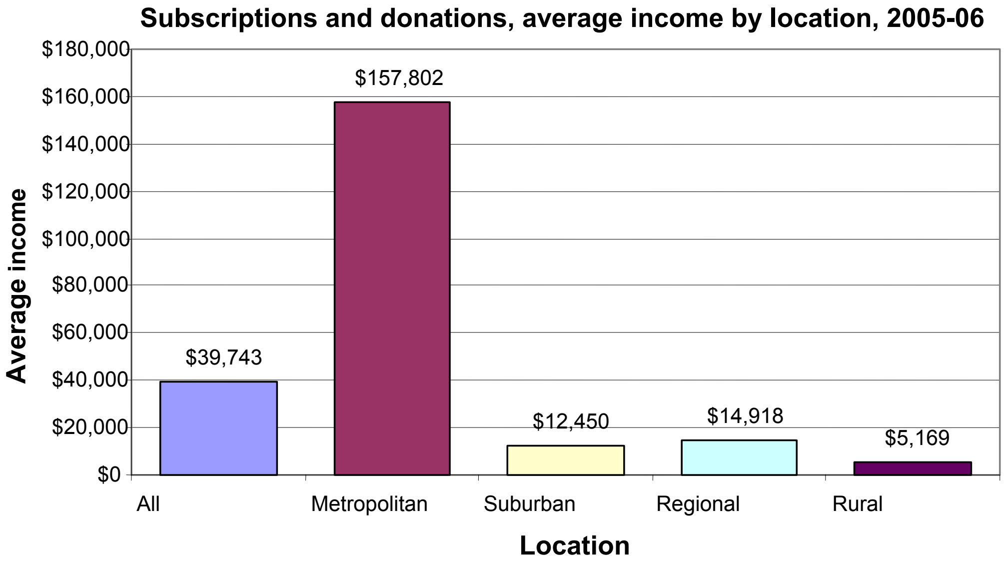
Most specialist broadcasting categories increased their level of sponsorship income from the previous period; the ethnic sector recording the biggest rise with a 110% increase in average station sponsorship income. Indigenous stations, on the other hand, recorded a 17% decrease in average sponsorship.

Youth, fine music and religious stations brought in the highest number of sponsorship dollars, with averages of $192,887, $179,813 and $169,432 respectively. While Indigenous and Print Handicapped stations relied least on sponsorship income, averaging less than $26,000.

Donations and subscriptions are a common source of income for community radio stations with 89% of stations receiving funding from these sources.

Total sector subscription income was $3,937,987 dollars, and donation income was $5,804,728, totalling to $9,742,715 or 18% of national income.

For the sector, the average combined income from subscriptions and donations was $39,743. Location and associated population density however was a significant factor in station potential to raise funds in this manner, with metropolitan stations achieving the highest average at $157,802 per station, while suburban, regional and rural stations averaged less than $15,000.



The religious sector received the greatest support from donors, with an average of $115,760 in donations per station, and a total income from donations of $3,935,843.

The fine music sector achieved the highest level of subscription income, with an average of $180,620 per station, and a total of $722,481.

Recurrent Commonwealth funding for community broadcasting is channelled from the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts (DCITA) via the sector's funding body, the Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF). However, not all stations apply for or receive CBF funding. Overall CBF grant funding accounted for 9% of total income for the sector.

Income (excluding GST) – all stations/national, 2005-2006 (n=285)				
Income	Total	%	No. of stations (weighted)	Average
Educational institutions	$1,341,832	2.5%	15	$90,664
DCITA Indigenous Broadcasting Program	$5,262,237	9.7%	19	$276,960
Federal Government grants	$1,222,739	2.3%	33	$37,165
State/Territory Government grants	$1,217,006	2.3%	45	$27,105
Local Government grants	$169,352	0.3%	36	$4,704
Government Grants	**$2,609,098**	**4.8%**	**86**	**$30,303**
CBF Grants	$4,850,597	9.0%	179	$27,098
Philanthropic organisation grants	$205,436	0.4%	16	$12,681
Sponsorship	$22,127,263	40.9%	276	$80,288
Subscriptions/ membership fees	$3,937,987	7.3%	255	$15,455
Donations	$5,804,728	10.7%	239	$24,288
Fundraising	$1,668,205	3.1%	181	$9,237
Access fees	$1,514,321	2.8%	44	$34,106
Production/studio fees	$547,735	1.0%	66	$8,286
Training	$345,532	0.6%	75	$4,613
Access/production/training	**$2,407,589**	**4.5%**	**141**	**$17,039**
Other	$3,862,204	7.1%	236	$16,372
Total (excluding CBF grants)	$49,226,580	91.0%	285	$172,725
Grand Total	**$54,077,178**	**100.0%**	**285**	**$189,744**

Although community radio stations raise most of their own income, stations may also receive grants from other Australian Government departments, as well as from their respective state and local governments for specific projects or purposes. When this income was added to the funding sourced via the CBF, government grant income accounted for 14%[14] of total station income during the period (up from 12% in the previous survey period).

It is important to note that grant income was unevenly distributed. For instance, Australian Government grants accounted for 2% of overall station income across the sector in the 2005-06 financial year, but only 12% of stations received a grant from the Australian Government during that period (down from 18% in 2003-04). The situation was similar in the case of state and local government grants and those from philanthropic organisations.

Also, the level of grants received by the different specialist station categories varied widely and in some cases no grants where received at all. For instance: seniors, fine music and religious stations did not receive any grants from the Australian Government; Indigenous, print disabled and seniors received no funding from local government; and religious and seniors received no funding from state government.

Income derived from educational institutions was also restricted with only 5% of stations receiving such funding. Similarly, only a quarter of stations (26%) received income from training fees during the period (up from 21% in 2003-04).

[14] Excluding DCITA Indigenous Broadcasting Program grants to Indigenous stations

Overall, an increase in sponsorship revenue had the greatest impact on the total income for the sector, increasing the total income for the sector by 4.5 million dollars.

Average station expenditure stable

Sector wide, total station expenditure during the period was $51,937,220, with an average of $182,236 per station. Total sector expenditure increased by 7% from the previous survey period, while average station expenditure remained relatively stable.

Wages, salaries and related on-costs accounted for the single largest expenditure item during the period at 45% of total average station spending; however, as only 58% of stations employed staff, these costs would have constituted a considerably higher proportion of expenditure at those stations. Sector wide, the total expenditure of $23,181,810 was 4% more than for the previous survey period.

Expenditure (excluding GST) – all stations/national, 2005-2006 (n=285)

Expenditure	Total	%	No. of Stations (weighted)	Average
Transmitter link	$1,974,996	3.80%	189	$10,477
Salary, wage and on costs	$23,181,809	44.63%	182	$127,373
Transmission equipment	$1,177,433	2.27%	127	$9,293
Studio/production equipment	$2,180,205	4.20%	214	$10,183
Other equipment	$1,278,645	2.46%	200	$6,390
Transmission (non link)	$2,832,528	5.45%	223	$12,725
Copyright	$1,329,774	2.56%	280	$4,742
Other	$17,981,823	34.62%	277	$64,940
Total	**$51,937,215**	**100.00%**	**285**	**$182,236**

The expenditure category that showed the greatest increase from the previous survey period was that of studio and production equipment with a total spend of $2,180,205, 55% higher than for 2004-05.

Transmission costs form significant part of station expenditure

Sixty-one percent of stations leased their transmission site and/or facilities from a third party, 6% more than for 2003-04.

The current survey shows that the sector spent $4,807,524 on transmission related costs (including site operational costs and transmission linking costs, but excluding transmission equipment purchase).

Combined sector transmission operational and equipment costs were $5,984,958, accounting for 12% of total national expenditure.