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No. 16

26 FEB 93

THE WEEKLY UPDATE ON THE UK RADIO INDUSTRY

NEW GROUPS FOR NEW LICENCES

The Radio Authority has recommended that groups applying to enter the radio industry apply for start-up licenses for new areas, rather than requests for re-advertised 150 licenses which are likely to be re-awarded to present incumbents. The Authority has also indicated that local and regional stations are unlikely to be licensed with rock or classical formats that compete with Virgin Radio or Classic FM.

Addressing a Radio Academy conference, the Authority's Deputy Chief Executive Paul Brown said the re-advertisement process had been causing "great concern" amongst existing licensees. Lord Chalfont (Radio Authority Chairman) has said that the Authority has no pre-disposition for change, it thinks Authority Members will avoid fixing something that hasn't already been broken. In general, the Radio Authority has a duty to ensure that any radio applicants are offered the frequencies for the services to increase the number of listeners and to increase listener choice.

Radio Authority Head of Development David Visk promised to advertise a mixture of one new license per month, concurrent with the 150 re-advertisements. "We are not setting out to destabilise what is already a reasonably fragile industry

after twenty years," Visk explained. "Our starting point is that we are not setting out to wreck havoc on the existing system."

"New applicants can and will challenge existing licensees for the licenses," added Paul Brown, "and some of those challenges may be successful. But in general, the licensees we have at the moment have proved rather better able to cope with the recession than some of our small businesses, and those that challenge for re-advertised licenses will have their work cut out."

Visk said the Authority had received enquiries from local and regional license applicants planning formats similar to existing national commercial stations. "Although the [broadcasting] act only requires a broadening of choice within EMR locally, nevertheless it is important, if you're applying for a service, to combine yourself and us that you have actually identified a gap in the market, taking into account both Independent National Radio and BBC services."

"What we haven't done is to turn around and proscribe applications from those people who wish, for example, to do a Virgin-like format in an existing or new area," explained Paul Brown. "When asked by

those who wish to provide something like an adult-orientated rock service, however, we would enquire that if they do propose to initiate a national commercial radio format, their application really must emphasise those aspects that substantiate local benefit - both in speech and music - which a national broadcaster is unlikely or unable to provide."

Virgin Radio's "Character of Service" agreement with the Radio Authority requires at least 85% of its output to be devoted to "rock-orientated music", complemented by no more than 20% speech. Additionally, 80% of the station's music has to be post-1970; between 20% and 50% has to have been released within the year prior to its broadcast and at least 5% must be album tracks unavailable as singles. But the agreement makes no attempt to define rock music or differentiate it from pop. Asked how the Authority would ensure that stations keep within their results of rock or pop, Paul Brown replied: "As the categories of music get narrower, we're going to have to rely on common sense in the marketplace and maybe the Radio Authority is going to have to put its head further up above the parapet than it has so far in this matter."

FORGAN DEFENDS RADIOS 1 & 2

NEW BBC Network Radio 80 Lis Forgan has defended the Corporation's right to run Radio One and Two, and has rejected suggestions that the two pop music services be prioritised. Addressing the first of three Focus On Radio debates organised by the Radio Academy, Forgan argued that the two stations reach a section of the licence-paying population answered by other BBC Radio services.

"If we simply hive them off to the commercial sector, they would not be the same services," one said. "Radio One is a station which has as broad a programming - live music, specialist programming, a lot of speech - which is quite different from the sets that it would present if it were a straightforward commercial station. It seems to me in the interest of listeners that they should have that option as well as

the commercial ones."

Forgan said that the way stations are funded drives their programme policy, so commercial stations are driven by different impulses than the BBC. "If your first duty is to secure a return on capital for shareholders," she said, "to satisfy the commercial and demographic needs of advertisers or reflect the necessary glow on the image of a corporate sponsor, you will make and transmit a different set of programmes."

But Peter Burton, Chairman of Children Radio, argued that commercial radio was forced to play against the BBC on an uneven playing field. "We are competing against pay stations like Radio One who are fairly similar to what we do," he said. "The only real difference is that they are able to sponsor live

music. This that out and there's not a lot of difference."

And Radio Authority Deputy Chief Executive Paul Brown said that Radio One is "unusually successful" because of what it is, not despite what it is. "The concept that a commercial operator running Radio One would just ditch everything that is valuable about it and go in pursuit of a marketplace it is not currently serving is nonsense. Radio One could be run commercially and carry the existing programme."

After only twelve days in post, Lis Forgan begged her audience: "Don't ask me yet exactly what changes I'm planning. I am in favour of a short period of education and reflection before action."

TRANS WORLD/GWR LICENCES RE-ADVERTISED

Eight more UK licences have been re-advertised by the Radio Authority for AM and FM stations in Newport, Cardiff, Bristol and Bournemouth. Trans World Communications currently holds the Newport and Cardiff licences, operating these jointly as

top 40 and Top 40 and oldies Touch FM. The Authority says that if the same applicant wins both areas, it will amalgamate them into a single licence. GWR Group holds licences for the other two areas, operating as top

40 GWR FM and oldies Bristol Classic Gold in Bristol, and as top 40 Top FM and oldies 20X Classic Gold in Bournemouth. The closing date for applications is 1 Jan, and a decision will be announced within three months.

RADIO DIARY

- 2 PM LITON/DEPTFORD closing date for licence re-applications for AM & FM services serving 1.0m and 0.6m adults respectively. Info: Radio Authority
- 2 PM RUTHWATER closing date for licence re-applications for AM & FM services serving 540,000 and 320,000 adults respectively. Info: Radio Authority
- 2 PM ST2 closing date for licence re-applications for AM & FM services serving 512,000 and 720,000 adults respectively. Info: Radio Authority
- 3/4 PM BBC 20TH ANNUAL COUNTY RADIO SEMINAR at Opreland Hotel & Convention Centre, Nuneville, 201. Country Radio Broadcasters Inc. tel: 0191-417-127-4407
- 3 PM RADIO ACADEMY MUSIC CONFERENCE at the Brewery, London EC1. £16-32. Info: The Radio Academy, PO Box 482, London W8 4EZ. tel: 071-323-3837
- 4 PM SCHEMERS closing date for new licences serving 65,000 adults on AM or FM. Info: Radio Authority
- 10 PM WHAT FUTURE FOR FISHING & RURAL PROGRAMMES? debate at Abbey Centre, London SW1 2-4.30pm, E10. Voice Of The Listener & Viewer, 101 Kings Drive, Gravesend, Kent DA12 5BQ tel: 0474-352935
- 10 PM WHAT FUTURE FOR LIVE MUSIC? debate at Committee Room, House of Commons 6-7.30pm. Voice Of The Listener & Viewer, 101 Kings Drive, Gravesend, Kent DA12 5BQ tel: 0474-352935
- 10 PM NORTHERN ENGLAND closing date for new regional FM licence serving 4.3 million adults. Info: Radio Authority
- 10 PM FOCUS ON RADIO (2) debate on Speech Radio at BT Conference Centre, Newport Street, London EC1. Info: The Radio Academy, PO Box 482, London W8 4EZ Tel: 071-323-3837
- 2/3/4 AM WHAT FUTURE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTING? & GLOBAL EXPERT FOR LISTENERS & VIEWERS conference in London. Voice Of The Listener & Viewer, 101 Kings Drive, Gravesend, Kent DA12 5BQ tel: 0474-352935
- 6 AM COMPTON closing date for licence re-applications for AM & FM services serving 620,000 and 530,000 adults respectively. Info: Radio Authority
- 6 AM SARDONIA/STRTS closing date for licence re-applications for AM & FM services serving 280,000 and 240,000 adults respectively. Info: Radio Authority
- 20 AM FOCUS ON RADIO (1) debate on music radio at BT Conference Centre, Newport Street, London EC1. Info: The Radio Academy, PO Box 482, London W8 4EZ Tel: 071-323-3837
- 19/20/21/22 AM RAD 85 organised by the National Association of Broadcasters at the Las Vegas Convention Centre. Info: 202-429-5350
- 20 AM LONDON/DEPTFORD closing date for new local FM licence serving 100,000 adults. Info: Radio Authority
- 20 AM FISHING RADIO launches nationally on 1715 AM
- 4 PM NORTHERN ISLAND closing date for new regional FM licence serving 1.4m adults. Info: Radio Authority
- 4 PM PETERBOROUGH closing date for licence re-applications for AM & FM services serving 575,000 and 225,000 adults respectively. Info: Radio Authority
- 11 PM WHAT ABOUT THE WORKERS? (3) at BBC Pebble Hill, Birmingham. Info: The Radio Academy, PO Box 482, London W8 4EZ Tel: 071-323-3837

RADIO WAVES

Some chat from the recent deluge of radio conferences. Tongue firmly in cheek, the Radio Authority's Paul Brown ribbed the views of ILE management: "We all know that anybody can be a Programme Controller and, if we didn't have to pay for the wretched output, running a station would be so much more profitable and we wouldn't have to deal with those frightful people with unusual requirements and habits. By god, many of them don't even wear suits" **** Don Thomson, MD of The Radio Sales Company, predicted: "1993 will see the greatest change in the [radio] marketplace since the introduction of ILE in 1973" **** Paul Brown again: "Whatever else can be said about BAMP, it is interesting that one or two of those BBC [local] radio stations that were deemed to be water aren't dead in the water any more. I suspect that there is an element that they are providing things which independent radio, on occasion and possibly in a different way, used to provide which they don't provide any more" **** Asked by Virginia Radio's Charlie Lawton whether Capital Radio had succeeded its permitted radio holdings by buying Midlands Radio, Radio Authority Chief Executive Peter Baldwin replied: "It's one we are receiving correspondence about. It is a matter for the Office of Fair Trading." **** Ian Rufus, MD of ****/Stratford set: "As the principle of licences renewal issues in the road ahead, the sound of appealing brains and the crashing of reverse gears is almost deafening. Stations have recognised that if they are to retain their licences then they are going to have to capitalise on their own [unique selling point] - their localness" **** Whereas the Radio Authority's Paul Brown argued: "I don't really think there's an

independent radio station now that is doing something because his licence is up for renewal. Not really, not in the economy we're in at the moment, not in the highly competitive world" **** Discussing use of the new 105-108 FM band, Radio Clyde MD James Gordon argued: "I think there's a case for a restriction on development" **** Participating in a panel discussion, Radio Borders/Galloway's MD/PO Rod Webster illustrated the state of his operation: "We've got some microphones on this table that I've got in my station" **** Ex-Radio Luxembourg Manager and London-based consultant John Callitt on the satellite broadcaster's demise: "Radio Luxembourg discovered that it's absolutely important that a station is available on portable radio if it's going to compete with other stations" **** Jess W/London MD David Katz: "It's sad to see the American radio industry in the mess that it's in. If we're not very careful in UK radio, we're going to start going down the same road" **** Owner of HMG/Leithing and shareholder in 18 stations, Robert Ruby of Radio Investments Ltd observed other group's radio start-ups: "There's been quite considerable differences between when a station has been founded by people who are involved with it, and what it ends up with a year later. It used to be a golden rule of venture capital that the first thing you did after starting something was to shoot the investor. And I think that still happens sometimes" **** Mike Powell, ex-Gazety ****/Bulldog MD, declared: "Glasgow radio is not local radio. If you hold an existing local licence and you're a jobless, I think that you deserve to lose your licence." He is bidding for a Londonwide AM licence for country

music **** Peter Brooks, National Heritage Secretary, revealed that between five and six thousand copies had been sold of the government's Green Paper on the BBC **** BBC Network Radio MD his focus on listeners' attitude to the future of the BBC: "The radio audience's contribution to the argument would be entirely, absolutely and 100% in favour of the most conservative attitude you could possibly find. Knock off everything, they will say. 'Nice foggy,' said a letter I got today, 'radio is not for changing.'" **** Newcastle, in the world outside of conference halls, after intense speculation, John Aspinall has left the MD post at Virgin Radio **** The Broadcasting Standards Council has rejected listeners' complaints about the word "bloody" in Radio 3's Park Road Solihull; the Linda Lahti character in Radio 1's Steve Wright show; an allegedly offensive remark by Radio 2's Johnnie Walker; a tabloid newspaper's comment on AIDS repeated in Radio 4's Sunday Papers; and a trail for Radio 4's Sex in The Head series **** Gwyneth Thomas, President of Luxembourg media group CLT, visited London recently to express his interest in investing in UK radio to Radio Authority Chairman Lord Chalfont. A London licence would complement CLT's success with Atlantic 252 in the rest of the country **** Asked why a new single by David Leary entitled hawke was not getting airplay on American radio, MFM Editor W The Quorbox exclaimed: "If the song didn't use the word 'f' twice, I think it'd be getting played a lot more" **** And not weak the Radio Authority re-advertises six London licences, offers two new London licences, and announces winners for Sussex, Bedford and Aberdeen ****

AREA	MDY	TEL	ADVERTISED	CLOSE	SIC	MMDD	TIME	FORMAT	IN AIR	PROGRAM
<u>NATIONAL LICENCES</u>										
National	AM									
National	AM	43a		4 Feb 92	5	13 May 92	YBHM ASD	speech rock	Spring 95 30 Apr 95	1053/1089a 1225 AM
<u>REGIONAL LICENCES</u>										
SE England	FM	1,900,000	22 Jan 93	4 May 93						1 Sep 94
NE England	FM	4,300,000	8 Dec 92	16 Dec 92						1 Sep 94
Govern. Territory	FM	1,600,000	30 Sep 92	5 Jan 93	5					1 Sep 94
<u>RE-ADVERTISED LOCAL LICENCES</u>										
Besport	AM	360,000	26 Feb 93	1 Jun 93						1 Jan 95 1305 AM
Besport	FM	190,000	26 Feb 93	1 Jun 93						1 Jan 95 97.4 FM
Cardiff	AM	330,000	26 Feb 93	1 Jun 93						1 Jan 95 1254 AM
Cardiff	FM	550,000	26 Feb 93	1 Jun 93						1 Jan 95 103.2 FM
Bristol	AM	1,810,000	26 Feb 93	1 Jun 93						29 Oct 94 1260 AM
Bristol	FM	610,000	26 Feb 93	1 Jun 93						29 Oct 94 96.3/103 FM
Bournemouth	AM	460,000	26 Feb 93	1 Jun 93						1 Jan 95 029 AM
Bournemouth	FM	450,000	26 Feb 93	1 Jun 93						1 Jan 95 102.3 FM
Peterborough	AM	575,000	4 Feb 93	4 May 93						1 Jan 95 1332 AM
Peterborough	FM	225,000	4 Feb 93	4 May 93						1 Jan 95 102.7 FM
Coventry	AM	620,000	7 Jan 93	6 Apr 93						1 Jan 95 1358 AM
Coventry	FM	530,000	7 Jan 93	6 Apr 93						1 Jan 95 97/107.9 FM
Dundee/Perth	AM	280,000	7 Jan 93	6 Apr 93						1 Jan 95 1181/1544AM
Dundee/Perth	FM	240,000	7 Jan 93	6 Apr 93						1 Jan 95 96.4/98.2 AM
Ayr	AM	510,000	4 Dec 92	2 Mar 93						15 Oct 94 1025 AM
Ayr	FM	230,000	4 Dec 92	2 Mar 93						15 Oct 94 96.9 FM
Burthampton	AM	540,000	2 Dec 92	2 Mar 93						15 Oct 94 1357 AM
Burthampton	FM	520,000	2 Dec 92	2 Mar 93						15 Oct 94 95.6 FM
Luton/Bedford	AM	1,030,000	2 Dec 92	2 Mar 93						15 Oct 94 792/828 AM
Luton/Bedford	FM	660,000	2 Dec 92	2 Mar 93						15 Oct 94 96.3/97.0 FM
Leeds	AM	1,230,000	4 Nov 92	8 Feb 93	2					1 Sep 94 829 AM
Leeds	FM	770,000	4 Nov 92	8 Feb 93	2					1 Sep 94 96.3 FM
Southend/Chelms	AM	1,530,000	6 Nov 92	9 Feb 93	1					12 Sep 94 1431/1398M
Southend/Chelms	FM	770,000	6 Nov 92	9 Feb 93	1					12 Sep 94 96.3/102.0 FM
Aberdeen	AM	230,000	8 Oct 92	12 Jan 93	3					29 Jul 94 1035 AM
Aberdeen	FM	230,000	8 Oct 92	12 Jan 93	3					29 Jul 94 96.9 FM

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