

Submission to the Review of Australian Broadcasting Services in the Asia Pacific

22/06/18

Shortwave broadcasts can be life saving in emergencies. During Cyclone Debbie for instance, one of the radio stations' transmitters was damaged in the cyclone's path up north, so some of the area would not have had radio coverage. Where I live we copped the remnants of Debbie wind and rain and my mobile phone was out for about ten days. If it wasn't for my wired landline phone and local ABC radio station, I would not have had communication and information. Since the closure of Radio Australia, **remote** parts of Australia and the Pacific do not have the radio option.

Extract from Shortwave website SWLing :

Many thanks to *SWLing Post* reader, [REDACTED], who has shared this special recording: a shortwave relay of the ABC Far North radio service.

[REDACTED] explains:

“ABC Radio (Australian Broadcasting Corporation) Far North (Queensland, Australia) Emergency Broadcast Service during the period that Severe Tropical Cyclone was making landfall in Australia’s Far North Queensland region. This capture of the shortwave broadcast was made near Sydney, Australia on 6.15MHz at 2119 Queensland Time (1119 UTC) on the 11th April 2014. The broadcast was being transmitted via a re-purposed Radio Australia transmitter in Shepperton, Victoria.

Severe Tropical Cyclone Ita is a tropical cyclone that crossed the coast of Queensland, Australia on 11 April 2014. The system was first identified over the Solomon Islands as a tropical low on 1 April 2014, and gradually moved westward, eventually reaching cyclone intensity on 5 April. On 10 April, Ita intensified rapidly into a powerful Category 5 system on the Australian Scale, but it weakened significantly in the hours immediately preceding landfall the following day. At the time of landfall at Cape Flattery at 12 April 22:00 (UTC+10), Dvorak intensity was approximately T5.0, consistent with a weak Category 4 system, and considerably lower than T6.5 observed when the system was at maximal intensity. Meteorologists noted the system had, at such time, developed a secondary eyewall which weakened the inner eyewall; as a result, the system was considerably less powerful than various intensity scales predicted. Ita’s impact on terrain was attenuated accordingly.”

[Click here to download this recording as an MP3](#), or simply listen via the embedded player below. Note that this broadcast has also been added to the [Shortwave Radio Audio Archive—please subscribe to our podcast](#) to receive future recordings automatic

Also with the increasing effects of Climate Change being felt more and more with stronger and more destructive cyclones, a longer cyclone season due to warmer waters and the problem of rising sea levels for the Pacific Islanders, they need **increased** communications/information not less! Because shortwave radio can travel

thousands and thousands of Kms, even around the world, its transmitters are nowhere near the natural disaster area so emergency information doesn't stop. Radio is so important it is part of the Queensland Government's Disaster Kit which advises the use of "battery powered radio with extra batteries." Radio is still the last resort after all other technologies have failed.

China has strengthened its shortwave broadcasts in our region since the demise of Radio Australia Shortwave. It comes in loud and clear with its soft propaganda. It is difficult to censor shortwave broadcasts in restrictive countries. Unlike their relative ease in monitoring the internet, government authorities face technical difficulties monitoring radio frequencies. Rural Melanesians and Polynesians are often being left without any communications in times of disaster, as in the recent New Guinea Earthquake. See RN broadcast 21/06/18:

http://mpegmedia.abc.net.au/rn/podcast/2018/06/rnd_20180621_1843.mp3

and RN broadcast 20/06/18:

http://mpegmedia.abc.net.au/rn/podcast/2018/06/rnd_20180620_1852.mp3

Pacific countries have been deserted by Australia. It is very important for us to have a truthful broadcast presence in the region. We just can't leave it all up to Radio New Zealand. We have to do our fair share too!

The ABC has been talking about their FM broadcasts to remote areas of Australia and the Pacific. Well, compared to shortwave broadcasts FM is totally inadequate. FM radio waves do not travel far beyond the visual horizon, so reception distances for FM stations are limited to 50-120 kms. They can also be blocked by mountains and hills.

Radio Australia has always been a source of information, entertainment and comfort to far-flung areas of Australia and the Pacific. **Commonsense dictates that Radio Australia should be turned back on!**

Frank Fedrick
