

To Whom it May Concern:

I wanted to add my voice to the chorus of submissions on this matter.

I am a 50 year old Australian that lives part in Finland , far north Europe and partly in Western Australia.

I am a Amateur Radio operator with a full level license , and run a small Youtube channel focussing primarily on Shortwave Radio which has 6500 subscribers.

<https://www.youtube.com/user/HamAndShortwaveRadio>

While my Youtube channel only attracts a very small percentage of the amount of shortwave radio listeners in the world it was clear by their feedback to me that Radio Australia's close down as well as the NT Regional stations was EXTREMELY unpopular.

Many were what could be described as being outraged , even dismayed at the closures of these services.

I can only imagine what residents in the Radio Australia and ABC regionals intended reception areas thought....

I suspect that NO ONE in those places would be supportive of the decisions to close these services.

As a Ham Radio operator that uses the shortwave spectrum for my own personal communications I am well aware of the characteristics , both good and bad of this area of this part of the radio spectrum.

This submission is really to try and word the effectiveness of shortwave communications in the simplest possible way.

I cannot comment on the safety requirements of listeners in outback Australia , those on remote islands , or in the NT as I have no experience in that matter however I know from my own experience that there is nothing like hearing the voice of fellow Australians come through the radio when you are a vast distance away.

It brings a closeness that cannot be measured in statistics numbers or dollars spent.

When the Radio Australia shortwave service was strangled due to repeated budget cuts and then finally axed , I felt almost abandoned by the Australian government.

Their reasons given for it were weak , illogical , and not founded on facts.

Shortwave radio services have been around since the very early days of radio , and perhaps it is thought that because it is old , that it has no value , and should be replaced with a new technology.

But this is flawed thinking ,, it is upgrading for upgrading sake , without evaluating its real benefits.

We have many examples of old technologies that still work well , so there is no need to replace them with something newer.

In fact , everything that is basic , works well , yet on the other hand , many modern technologies , while offering advantages of their own ,, are often less reliable or in other ways flawed.

While technology has brought blessings , it also has brought a curse - and a fragility along with it.

One example is Mobile Phones.

It would be difficult for many people to imagine life without a phone in their pocket.

Since Australia got mobile phones we went from car phones in the boot , to hand held bricks , both using analogue technology , and later replaced with smaller digital handsets , and now smart phones.

The technology improvements in these devices over the decades has been impressive.

However , even though these devices are impressive , they still are based on a fundamentally weak technology.

They require an extensive network of repeater type cell phone towers , handling thousands or tens of thousands of calls instantaneously and connecting these to the rest of the network.

The weakness is that these towers require connection to the power grid for operation.

If power is cut , for example during a disaster , they will have between 4 to 8 hours of battery backup depending on how much use it is having at that time , which would be expected to be high during an emergency.

After that time , they STOP.

This example of a great technology that has been developed over decades that is fundamentally still just as weak and fragile as it was on the day that it was invented decades ago.

The fact is , is that the more high tech a system is , often the more fragile it is.

Basic technologies on the other hand have flaws , and no one will deny that , but they almost always work.

Shortwave radio compared to modern communications methods may seem archaic to some , but it offers some very real advantages over most new types of communication technology.

Firstly , shortwave communications as used by Radio Australia and the NT regionals allows users to use very basic and low cost receivers to receive the broadcasts.

Shortwave is portable , meaning that receiver owners can be in a car , on a boat , on a horse , at home - ANYWHERE.

Satellite based TV or Radio communication options cannot match that , and they never will.

Satellite based communication cannot be compared to shortwave communications.

They are less able to be compared than apples and oranges.

I am not a Luddite or ignorant and refusing technology , both Satellite based communication AND shortwave communications are BOTH good ,, but they are not equal and one is NOT a replacement for the other.

If the powers at be desire satellite radio or TV , and more web streams to the cities , then fine , let them have that ,, but DO NOT think that these new technologies are a replacement for shortwave , because they are not !

John Tusa , Managing Director BBC world Service 1986 - 1992 is credited as saying -

"If shortwave had of been discovered today instead of eight decades ago it would be hailed as an amazing new technology with great potential for the world that we live in today"

Another matter that I wanted to bring up was about the trend of international broadcasters cutting back on their shortwave services , and sadly it is true. Since the end of the Cold War era many broadcasters have reduced or stopped their service on shortwave.

Not all though stopped and transferred to web streams or satellite though - many just stopped.

One example of a station that has reduced its transmission schedules is that of the Voice Of America. (VOA)

This one time super broadcaster that was able to be heard in almost every part of the world at any time of the day or night has drastically cut back , but they haven't stopped.

On the contrary , in some areas they have expanded , and in some areas they have expanded significantly.

It is the charter of the VOA that it is not primarily a tool of the US government , and as such it isn't used to spread propaganda or influence peoples in other countries - directly. To get around this legal restriction the US government has other shortwave stations to deliver the propaganda.

One example is 'Radio Farda' on shortwave which is broadcasting to Iran in local languages , in order to affect public opinion of the US policy in that country.

So while some reports will say that the VOA has cut back , they don't tell you that they now operate other NEW stations instead.

Other examples of US propaganda stations on shortwave are "Radio Free Europe" , "Radio Liberty" , "Radio Free Asia" , and on and on.

While the trend seems to indicate a scale back of US use of shortwave , they certainly have not forgotten its effectiveness in getting the message through to target audiences.

The ABC , and particularly the news services on Radio Australia have for decades been thought of as being trustworthy and unbiased , with a particular focus on events in the Asia pacific region.

The ABC was trusted to give possibly alternative views to news topics compared to the BBC , VOA , and CRI (China Radio International).

With shortwave radio listeners are able to hear news and views from all of these countries with a more balanced view of matters could be heard from Radio Australia.

Without the voice of Radio Australia , and to a lesser extent NT regionals being on the air , there will become a bias toward the opinion from other countries.

CRI actively promotes the views of the Chinese government and it is my opinion that CRI is the worlds biggest spreader of state propaganda.

Can the Australian government really abandon international shortwave broadcasting under these conditions ?

So what has the result been since Radio Australia left the shortwave bands ,, that's right CHINA has started up transmitting on former Radio Australia frequencies in order to catch the ears of former listeners.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-06-22/china-takes-over-radio-australias-old-shortwave-frequencies/9898754>

<http://www.hawaiipublicradio.org/post/pacific-news-minute-china-takes-shortwave-radio-frequencies-abandoned-australia>

<https://www.radioinfo.com.au/news/china-radio-international-takes-over-radio-australias-old-shortwave-frequencies-pacific>

This was a huge political blunder of the Australian government to end SW , and then the regionals.

There is a way of determining future events based on events that occurred in the past called 'Generational Dynamics'.

<http://www.generationaldynamics.com/ww2010.htm>

'Generational Dynamics is based on a simple idea: That societies and nations make mistakes and then learn lessons from those mistakes. But generations grow older, retire and die, and are replaced by new generations who are too young to remember those mistakes and those lessons. When that happens, the mistakes are repeated.'

Generational Dynamics predicts that Australia , and indeed the world will go to war with China in the not so distant future.

Instead of passing this off as a crack pot idea , it should be noted that the major worlds leaders follow Generational Dynamics or have their own advisers that consider the generational dynamic concept to advice them on future world policies and the possible outcomes of these policies.

While in main stream media China is often considered to be Australia's friend , it is NOT. It is a trading partner that has been stocking up its inventory in preparation for war.

The mining boom that Australia benefited from provided the materials for China to build and expand its military.

China has amassed a huge store of metals , and food in preparation for lasting out sanctions.

Their government backed production of goods converts their resources into hard foreign currencies.

<https://www.ft.com/content/bb5e94aa-fb05-11e5-b3f6-11d5706b613b>

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-07-26/it-s-a-great-time-to-be-a-fancy-pork-farmer>

<https://www.investopedia.com/articles/investing/021015/why-china-stockpiling-millions-barrels-oil.asp>

<http://www.bigag.com/topics/row-crop/effects-chinas-stock-piling-grains/>

There is no need to create vast stockpiles if you expect that your sources of these items will continue.

Clearly China is expecting that they will be cut off from the supplies of these goods.

This is no time for Australia to lose its voice in international media.

People NEED both Radio Australia and the regionals to be put back on shortwave , along with appropriate funding.

History proves , backed by current events , that Australia is heading for a time of crisis , and this is the time to solidify Australia's voice that can be broadcast widely and benefited by multitudes , just as it proved to be a vital service during the past.

Shortwave WORKS as this example of Radio Australia that I picked up at my house in Finland shows , some 15 THOUSAND kilometres away.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U8vN2N7-W4U>

Do not underestimate the audience size and real need for Radio Australia and the NT regionals on shortwave , in , around , and beyond Australian borders.

It is my sincere wish that the shortwave closure decisions both for Radio Australia and NT regionals will be reversed.

Failure to do so would be a gross disservice and neglect of our citizens , our neighbours , and friends around the world.

Much less affluent countries can afford a shortwave service , why can't we ?

Regards

Greg White

