

# Brief History of SBS

From: Special Broadcasting Service publicity material and annual reports

## 1975

### June

Experimental ethnic radio stations 2EA and 3EA commence.

## 1976

### March

Consultative Committee on Ethnic Broadcasting established to consider future of ethnic broadcasting.

### September

ABC requested to establish permanent ethnic broadcasting service.

## 1977

### January

National Ethnic Broadcasting Advisory Council (NEBAC) established.

### June

Government offer to ABC to establish ethnic broadcasting service withdrawn.

### November

State Ethnic Broadcasting Advisory Councils (SEBACs) established in NSW and Victoria.

Governor-General proclaims amendments to Broadcasting and Television Act 1942 setting up SBS.

## 1978

### January

SBS established and assumes responsibility for 2EA and 3EA. SBS Board Members appointed for three years. Dr Grisha Sklovsky is Chairman.

### February

2EA broadcasts 126 hours weekly in 36 languages. 3EA broadcasts 103 hours weekly in 32 languages.

### May

Executive Director, R E Fowell takes up a seven-year appointment.

### June

SBS asks SEBACs to reschedule 2EA and 3EA.

### July

Government decides public broadcasting and 'restricted commercial' stations could be assisted by SBS funding of ethnic programs.

### September

Joint statement by Minister for Post and Telecommunications and Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs on establishment of ethnic television service.

### October

SBS releases discussion paper on reorganisation of structures of 2EA and 3EA broadcasting groups.

## December

2EA broadcasts in 41 languages; 3EA broadcasts 126 hours weekly in 38 languages.

## 1979

### February

SBS releases policy for restructuring of 2EA and 3EA broadcasting groups.

### March

Ethnic Television Review Panel (ETRP) appointed to undertake public consultation program and prepare report on permanent ethnic television service.

Start of SEBAC's (Vic) new 3EA schedule.

### April

Telecast on ABC Channel 2 of first experimental ethnic television programs produced by SBS.

Final programs telecast 22 July 1979.

### May

3EA broadcasts in 41 languages.

### July

ETRP submits first report: The Aims and Philosophy of a Permanent Ethnic Television Service.

Start of SEBAC (NSW)'s new 2EA schedule.

### August

2EA Newcastle translator commences (29th).  
2EA Wollongong translator commences (30th).

### September

2EA broadcasts in 47 languages.

## November

First phase of policy for restructuring broadcast groups of 2EA and 3EA put into operation.

## December

EETP submits second report: The Structure of the Interim Multicultural/Multilingual Television Service to the Government. 2EA commences broadcasting through 4EB.

## 1980

### January

Government announces intention to establish Independent and Multicultural Broadcasting Corporation (IMBC) to provide multicultural television (MTV) and multilingual radio services.

A 9 member IMBC Implementation Committee appointed to provide bridge between disbanding of SBS and establishment of IMBC, and oversee activities of an Implementation Task Force, with particular emphasis on the establishment of a multicultural television service.

New 3EA 5kW AM transmitter commences.

### February

ETRP submits third report: Programming for the Multicultural/Multilingual Television Service - Objectives and Policies. IMBC Implementation Committee holds first meeting and IMBC Implementation Task Force established.

Weekly telecasts of second experimental cycle of ethnic television programs begin on ABC Channel 2 and continue until 4 May.

### May

Legislation to establish IMBC introduced into Parliament. Senate refers IMBC legislation to Standing Committee on Education and the Arts

for inquiry and report by first sitting day in August 1980.

## June

Minister appoints more diverse IMBC Implementation Committee of 13 members.

## July

2EA transmitter power upgraded to 5kW.

## August

Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts recommends: IMBC legislation not be proceeded with at this stage; Dix Committee to be asked to consider and examine a report on a second television channel; and until Dix Committee reports, MTV and ethnic radio to be provided on interim basis by SBS.

## October

Multicultural Television commences in Sydney and Melbourne both on VHF Channel 0 and on UHF Channel 28 in both capital cities.

# 1981

## June

Government announces decision not to proceed with the IMBC, abolishes IMBC Implementation Committee, dissolves NEBAC and SEBAC, and establishes SBS Advisory Council chaired by F Galbally.

## July

New SBS Board appointed, chaired by Sir Nicholas Shehadie.

## August

Interstation Program Exchange and Transcription Service (IPETS) established at Radio 2EA to assist ethnic public broadcasters.

# 1982

## July

Minister announces Government decision to extend MTV on UHF to 10 city and country centres: 1982--83 - Canberra, Goulburn, Cooma; 1983-84 - Newcastle, Wollongong, Adelaide, Brisbane, and 1984--85 - Hobart, Perth, Darwin. Minister announces increase to \$650,000 in subsidies to public broadcasters for ethnic programming.

## December

Ministers for Communications and for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs release discussion paper on extension and development of ethnic radio and announce establishment of Working Party to consider the question.

# 1983

## February

Minister announces appointments to SBS Advisory Council.

## April

Minister institutes Inquiry into purchasing policies of SBS, to be chaired by J H Oswin.

## May

Working Party to examine the options for long-term development of ethnic radio disbanded. Government undertakes to examine submissions and take these into account in implementing future policy in this area.

## August

Minister reaffirms Government decision to extend MTV.

Minister announces transmissions on VHF Channel 0 in Sydney and Melbourne to cease 1 January 1985.

## October

Commencement of SBS TV in Canberra.  
November - Extension of SBS TV to Goulburn and Cooma.

## December

Minister announces Committee of Review to examine role of SBS and recommend blueprint for future development of ethnic broadcasting. Oswin Inquiry report tabled.

Minister announces composition of Committee of Review: The Hon FX Connor QC (Chairman), C Dunne, W Lippmann MBE, M Thompson (Special Consultant).

## 1984

### April

SBS completes Submission to Committee of Review.

### August

SBS Board establishes Advisory Committee on Racism.

### December

Report of Committee of Review Serving Multicultural Australia - The Role of Broadcasting (the Connor Report) presented to Government.

## 1985

### January

Disbandment of SBS Advisory Council.

### February

Commencement of daytime television transmissions. Network 0/28 TV logo changed to SBS TV.

## May

SBS response to Connor Report submitted to Government. Conclusion of R Fowell's term as Executive Director.

## June

Minister announces extension of transmission on VHF Channel 0 in Sydney and Melbourne until 5 January 1986.

Extension of SBS TV to Newcastle, Wollongong, Adelaide, Brisbane and the Gold Coast.

## July

Government transfers SBS administration of subsidies to public broadcasters for ethnic language programs to Public Broadcasting Foundation.

## August

2EA broadcasts in 55 languages; 3EA broadcasts in 50 languages.

## September

Appointment of new Executive Director, R L Brown. Setting up and establishment of Joint Consultative Council.

## October

Government abolishes existing Planning Committees and establishes National Broadcasting Development Council.

## November

Report by Advisory Committee on Racism submitted to SBS Board.

## 1986

### January

Cessation of VHF Channel 0 transmissions in

Sydney and Melbourne. SBS TV is now the sole UHF-only television broadcaster in Australia.

### March

Extension of SBS TV service via AUSSAT to Perth and Hobart.

Government decisions on Connor Report announced.

SBS to be replaced by Special Broadcasting Corporation on 1 July 1987.

### June

First Corporate Plan presented to Minister for Communications.

### August

Government announces intention to amalgamate SBS with ABC as at 1 January 1987.

### December

Legislation to effect amalgamation defeated in the Senate. Senate Select Committee established to report on the question.

## 1987

### February

Minister advises SBS Board of Government's intention to amalgamate SBS with ABC by 1 July 1987.

### April

Prime Minister announces that proposed ABC-SBS amalgamation will not occur.

### June

Conclusion of R Brown's term as Executive Director.

### November

Commencement of term of new Executive Director, Brian Johns.

### December

Government decides to remove encryption requirement for SBS broadcast signals via AUSSAT, allowing people in south-eastern zone satellite beam footprint to receive both 2EA and SBS TV through use of small dish satellite receiving systems.

## 1988

### February

Government releases Department of Transport and Communications (DoTaC) discussion papers Review of National Broadcasting Policy - Australian Broadcasting Corporation. While concerned mainly with ABC, they also proposed: that SBS receive its own Act of Parliament with a clear set of objectives based on the central aims of providing high quality multicultural and multilingual programming; and, to guarantee the floor funding of the SBS at its 1987-88 level, increased in line with inflation, for the next three years.

### July

Government releases DoTaC discussion paper Review of National Broadcasting Policy - Special Broadcasting Service. This proposed possible model for a future SBS which involved: a separate Act containing a clear Charter of responsibilities; an organisational structure appropriate to a modern broadcaster; and, a mixed funding regime comprising an annual sum from the Budget, and other options available at the discretion of the Board, to obtain revenue from other than Budget sources, including television downtime usage, channel sharing, sponsorship, and sale of advertising time.

## August

SBS launches SBS Youth Orchestra.

## 1989

### June

Minister gives approval for SBS to receive moneys for program sponsorship in relation to the SBS test pattern and for the World Cup Soccer Series, in accordance with a number of specific conditions.

### July

Prime Minister announces Government's National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia. As part of the Agenda, the Government to introduce legislation to establish SBS as independent corporation with its own charter. SBS TV service to be extended to a further nine major centres throughout Australia: 1991 - Latrobe Valley; 1992 - Bendigo, Ballarat, Darling Downs; 1993 - Spencer Gulf, Darwin, North-east Tasmania; and, 1994 - Cairns, Townsville.

## 1990

### March

Government released details of new radio news and current affairs service to be produced by SBS Radio and supplied in at least 15 different community languages to interested public radio stations throughout Australia, and announced establishment of trainee program for people of non-English speaking background, in which the SBS will participate.

The SBS Youth Orchestra is now controlled by Youth Musical Endeavours Ltd, a company formed to manage the orchestra's affairs and which, by agreement, is licensed to use the title The SBS Youth Orchestra.

## 1991

### June

Government agreed to allow advertising on SBS TV and Radio under a new charter. Guidelines covering the form, content and placement of advertisements to be set by the SBS Board after a period of public consultation. Legislation to establish the charter to be introduced in Parliament in the 1991 Budget session. This will allow the SBS to sell up to 5 minutes of advertising or sponsorship per hour but these may only be broadcast between programs or in natural program breaks.

### December

The SBS become incorporated with the passage of the Special Broadcasting Service Act 1991.

## 1992

### November

Brian Johns resigns from the SBS to take up his appointment as chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Authority.

During the period 1992-93 there was a phased transfer of staff and facilities of the SBS to its new Sydney Radio and Television headquarters at Artarmon.

## 1993

### March

SBS Board announces the appointment of the 14 members of the SBS Community Advisory Committee (CAC). Mr Steve A Karas OAM is the chairperson of the Committee.

Malcolm Long appointed as new Managing Director for a five year period.

SBS's Codes of Practice booklet comes into operation.

## November

Prime Minister Keating officially opens the new Artarmon building.

## December

SBS TV to Cairns and Townsville, ahead of schedule.

## 1994

### January

SBS Radio National launched, providing an SBS radio service to Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth and Darwin. Extension of Radio National to include Hobart and Canberra is expected to take place within the next 12 months. Sydney and Melbourne Radio Stations 2EA and 3EA, now called Radio Sydney and Radio Melbourne respectively, remain the same, but a Second Frequency for both cities is planned in the near future.

### March

s54 of the SBS Act proclaimed, making the SBS a completely independent statutory corporation.

### April

SBS TV launched in Launceston, Tasmania.

### May

SBS TV launched in Darwin.

### July

Launch of Second Radio Frequencies for Sydney and Melbourne.

## 1995

### June

SBS Radio celebrates 20 years of multilingual broadcasting.

Common language (English) programs launched on SBS Radio.

## September

Indigenous Unit, Kuri-Gnia, established in Television Production.

## 1996

### February

SBS Radio's Canberra service begins broadcasting.

### April

The start of SBS Radio's Hobart service completes the SBS Radio National network, linking all State and Territory capital cities.

SBS documentary *Untold Desires* wins Most Outstanding Documentary at the Logie Awards.

### June

New SBS Enterprise Agreement certified.

### August

Extension of SBS Television Service to the NSW north coast and Albury/Wodonga.

## September

Networking of SBS Radio language programs.

## 1997

### March

SBS World News becomes first prime-time news bulletin to provide closed captioning for the deaf and hearing impaired.

### June

SBS Board agrees to non-government advertising on SBS Radio.