

Mallee Border Radio

3MBR – FM

“Your voice in the Mallee”

**The Radio Service broadcasting from
Murrayville on 103.5FM and Ouyen on 92.9FM in Victoria,
Lameroo on 107.5FM and Pinnaroo on 103.5FM in South Australia
And extending throughout the Mallee Border region of Australia**

Operated by Mallee Community Broadcasters Inc.

Business Plan

2018 – 2023

Mallee Community Broadcasters Inc.

Business Plan 2018 – 2023

(five years, commencing 1 July 2018 and concluding 30 June 2023)

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Mallee Community Broadcasters Inc. Business Plan– 2019 to 2023

SUMMARY

Radio 3MBR FM has 26 years of unbroken broadcasting service to the remote Mallee Border region extending across the mid west of Victoria and South Australia. The “Mallee Border” region is not delineated on a map but is proudly defined by its residents. The region and its characteristics are an integral to this Plan.

This Business Plan was prepared at the request of the Committee to help us plan, implement and monitor our future.

3MBR FM is a non-profit community access Radio Station run solely by volunteers. It is operated by the incorporated association Mallee Community Broadcasters Inc. registered ABN 46 337 038 056. The Association is registered under the Associations Incorporations Act in Victoria.

It is based at Murrayville in north west Victoria, and serves the Mallee Border region of Victoria and South Australia. The Radio Service broadcasting from Murrayville on 103.5FM and Ouyen on 92.9FM in Victoria, Lameroo on 107.5FM and Pinnaroo on 103.5FM in South Australia and extending throughout the Mallee Border region of Australia. This is a remote location supported by industry centred around: grazing, cropping, horticulture and tourism. This remoteness results in substantial shortfalls in access to radio, television or on-line services within the region.

3MBR FM provides entertainment, news and other information needed by people who live, visit or pass through its broadcast region. Its broadcast region extends from Ouyen in north west Victoria through to Geranium in eastern South Australia, a distance of over 200 kilometres by road. It is a large region of in excess of 17,000 square kilometres. The station potentially serves up to 15,000 people.

3MBR FM is the sole radio broadcaster throughout its broadcast region with the exception of the commercial broadcaster Flow FM which has a satellite fed repeater station covering only one town, Pinnaroo and district in South Australia.

The primary listeners of 3MBR FM comprises of people of all ages within the region. The region is populated with people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. People in the region can be categorised into four groups: residents, itinerant workers who are mainly foreign non-Australians, tourists and passers-by who are travelling the Sunraysia and Mallee Highways. At any one time it is estimated there may be up to 15,000 people in the region. Within those very broad categories are numerous sub-groups and minorities.

3MBR FM sees itself as viable and **slow** growing with self generated funding from the community and community organizations. It has identified it requires government grant funding to enhance its services to the Mallee Border community, itinerant workers, visitors and tourists in the region. Two new expansion projects are identified as central to its vision:

1. 3MBR FM intends to fully embrace the four school (R1-12) communities in the region through its proposed Student **Involvement** Program
2. 3MBR FM intends to extend its service to be the Emergency Warning **capability** provider for the region.

VISION:

The Vision, or aim, of 3MBR FM continues to be to operate an excellent community radio station which provides people in the wider community the opportunity to participate in, and receive relevant (in their view) current news, information and entertainment. We aspire to be a recognised as a valuable contributor to our community. In essence “Your voice in the Mallee”. 3MBR FM aims to provide a service to the community by being a “mate”, in the widest sense – helping to define and enhance the identity of the region and its people. Valuing and underpinning our community – as supporter, advisor and entertainer, inclusive and non discriminatory, always there, for ALL the people of the region.

As a foundation underpinning our vision we will maintain: strong governance, transparency, independence, integrity - which will facilitate stability and trust, and ultimately support, of the Community.

The Vision as outlined in the Constitution

The Constitution states the principal objectives of 3MBR FM which can be summarised as follows:

- i. to provide a high quality media service to the community including broadcasting, publishing, and networking for the dissemination of information, comment and entertainment;
- ii. to operate a radio station dedicated to serving the Mallee Border region;
- iii. to encourage the participation of the community in the provision of its services;
- iv. to assist neglected and overlooked groups and individuals to have their points of view heard;
- v. to promote community discussion and awareness of social, political, cultural, educational ... environmental and other issues [that impact upon the region]; and
- vi. to promote and encourage innovation and experimentation in radio.

The Business Plan addresses its vision and these objectives through undertaking activities to achieve five key Goals. It will report on its progress in addressing these goals and meeting its vision and objectives in its future Annual Reports.

This Business Plan was developed by the Committee in consultation with the 3MBR FM members, volunteers and listeners.

This document and will be used by the Committee to guide it in the implementation of the Business Plan. In implementing this Business Plan, the Committee will consider each of the

Strategies set out to achieve the five key goals, in the light of the human and financial resources available to 3MBR FM, and considerations of operational practicality.

HISTORY

A small group of local residents with the aim to establish a community radio station formed a community advancement society, and became incorporated on the 6 November 1980. The registered name of this society was "Mallee Community and Educational Broadcasters Co-Operative Limited". This organization conducted two test transmissions, and was granted a C Class Broadcasting Licence. 3MBR FM was one of the first Community broadcasters in Victoria. The society established 3MBR FM and officially commenced broadcasting in December 1982.

In 1982 3MBR FM commenced operation with a small band of volunteers broadcasting a limited range of programs from Murrayville in Victoria. Over the next twenty years the service grew and prospered with strong support and enthusiasm from the local community. Subsequently the station faltered and was in a state of decline both technically, physically and emotionally. In the years 2000 to 2016 3MBR FM barely managed to remain on air, with only one or two volunteers operating and manning the station. The on air content became old and predictable. Repeating itself daily in an unsophisticated chopped format between tracks and networked programmes. By 2016 the station was only operating on a day-to-day basis. Community support and enthusiasm had evaporated and almost all volunteers and sponsors had left the station.

In 2016 the Committee of the association undertook drastic action to stop the decline of the station. Over the past two years the Committee has led a process of turnaround and continual improvement. The process of improvement has included the committee reconstituting itself, adopted a new Constitution, undertaken technical maintenance and upgrades to improve the quality and reliability of the signals, re-jigged content, and started a re-engagement process with the community, its sponsors and its listeners.

This Business Plan encompasses the planned maintenance of services and the extension of the improvement processes started two years ago.

3MBR FM is a non-profit community access radio station run by volunteers still based at Murrayville in north west Victoria. It serves the Mallee Border districts of Victoria and South Australia. This includes the towns and surrounding districts of Cowangie, Murrayville, also Ouyen (via a translator) in the southern part of the Mildura Rural City Council in Victoria, and Pinnaroo, Parilla, Lameroo and Geranium, in the Mallee District Council in South Australia. Radio 3MBR FM broadcasts from two studios.

Further information about Radio 3MBR FM can be found at: www.3MBRFM.org.au.

FIVE YEAR GOALS

Our goals for 2019-23 are directed to developing and maintaining 3MBR FM as a community focused radio station contributing to participation and excellence in the entertainment, news and information in the Mallee Border region. The goals straddle across Listeners and Audience, Public awareness, Governance, Financial resources and Human resources aspects of 3MBR FM and its services.

The key Goals are:

1. Building engagement with the region's community and to maintain and enhance 3MBR FM's position as the region's sole radio station, and in particular encouraging and developing the volunteer base of the organisation; and Promoting local people and organisations and through radio presentation, live performance and other opportunities (Strategies- Content, Members and Volunteers)
2. Implementing the capital works programme, which will be the base on which to build the Emergency Warning capability and the Student Involvement Program. (Strategies – Technical)
3. Building the capacity of 3MBR FM to meet its vision by growing and diversifying its financial base through earned income, grants and donations to maintain financial viability and replace government grants (Strategies – Financial, Management)
4. Cementing the relevance of 3MBR FM by securing the two long term projects termed the Emergency Warning capability and the Student **Involvement** Program (Strategies – Management, Technical, Emergency Warning capability and the Student **Involvement** Program)
5. Employing a Station Manager to direct and undertake fund raising, technical issues and the Emergency Warning capability and the Student Involvement Program. (Strategies – Management, Finance, Technical, Emergency Warning capability and the Student **Involvement** Program)

In addition, continuing to develop and operate the station in accordance with licence obligations and best practice in management and community radio (guided by our Policies Practice and Procedures Manual).

We use will qualitative and quantitative measures to assess our performance against each of our goals.

STRATEGIES

Our goals will be met by employing a number of principal strategies. These are enumerated below.

CONTENT & PROMOTION STRATEGIES

Local content program

Radio 3MBR FM will support our volunteers to deliver a varied Station Program which reflects the expressed needs of listeners, and is delivered within budget.

3MBR FM has a well established reputation for consistent, high quality broadcasting. We currently record and broadcast just over 100 hours of local content annually.

In the next five years we will work to improve opportunities for local people and organisations to benefit from our broadcast and events programs and we aim to increase our local content to 500 hours, or more, annually.

We will commence to document the number of occasions and hours of recording and broadcasting local content and, similarly, interviews with local people and representatives of local organisations. We will document the number and broadcast hours of programs directed to a younger demographic and women.

Marketing Plan

We aim to expand our listening audience: by targeting new demographics, by recruiting suitable volunteer presenters, and by increasing our promotion and support for local events and organisations.

As part of the Reorganisation between 2016 and 2018 3MBR FM has developed a greater variety of programs for broadcast, to ensure that services provided are appropriate (e.g. meeting the age, religion, sex, culture, and diversity) for listeners. It has:

- i. increased the number of in-house productions.
- ii. increased the range of music played and placed genres in identifiable daily and weekly scheduled time slots
- iii. provided programs of interest to younger listeners
- iv. reduced the number of repeated programs.

Develop a plan to improve the method and timeliness of obtaining listener feedback.

- i. Review the membership of the listener panel, including consideration of increasing its size, increasing the frequency of consultation, and incorporating suggested changes.
- ii. Improve the use of the Feedback book so that listener comments registered are heeded by Committee and Management.

Review the content and delivery of all programs.

Listener surveys and feedback from stakeholders will assist us to assess progress towards our goals over the next five years. Committee members are involved in or close observers of programs, and actively contribute to the evaluation process.

Investigate conducting a comprehensive survey of the listenership prior to the development of the next Business Plan.

Marketing strategy

3MBR FM will strive to be a well-recognised and well-respected community radio station catering for the information and entertainment needs of the people in our region.

Our strategic marketing goal is to engage new listeners and new partners from the regional community. We will continue to review our market and find ways to meet their needs.

Present programs that meet the expectations of our listeners

Expand our a pool of volunteers to present programs and assist in other areas

Develop and implement programming policies that give opportunities to local organisations and local people our highest priority

Actively engage and seek commitment and feedback from key stakeholders – the Community, Volunteers, Members and Sponsors

Employ a part time Station Manager

Maximise our position in the community and the region to generate more income

Expand program inclusion to minorities and disadvantaged, including visually impaired, physically disabled, infirm, indigenous, youth, non-English speakers, LGBTI and women.

Targeting the market

We recognise the diversity of media now available to our listeners and other stakeholders, and

we target our market by conventional and new media, including:

Investigate opportunities to increase public knowledge of the Station.

- i. Continue current publicity activities.
- ii. Employ greater use of Community Noticeboards, both physical and virtual and community newspapers.
- iii. Send articles about the Station to community and service organisations for their publications
- iv. Conduct a Station Open Day
- v. The above is in addition to existing strategies of:
On-air announcements and programming

“Word of mouth” publicity through current volunteers and events such as outside broadcasts

Distribution of posters and flyers to promote special events

The 3MBR FM website (www.3MBRFM.org.au)

Social media, for which a new set of policies and procedures is under preparation. In addition to increasing the amount of Station content on the website, the addition of streaming and community links has been identified, we do not have the resources to enable these services to be introduced at this time.

Presence of other online sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram (to name just three) is identified as venues to lift to our profile, we do not have the resources to enable this to be introduced, operated and moderated at this time.

MEMBERS & VOLUNTEERS STRATEGIES

Radio 3MBR FM will expand the existing Membership and Volunteer base and ensure that 3MBR FM fosters a caring, respectful culture which enables everyone to contribute and participate in a fulfilling way.

Radio 3MBR FM will support our staff and volunteers to deliver a varied Station Program which reflects the expressed needs of listeners, and is delivered within budget.

Undertake activities to attract more volunteers and retain existing ones, including for Station administration.

- i. Develop a plan to engage with high schools to attract student participation.
- ii. Identify gaps in Station operations and undertake targeted recruitment to fill any specific niche needs at the Station.
- iii. Run training programs more regularly.
- iv. Develop a procedure for reviewing Volunteers’ skills, including conducting obligatory Refresher Courses, in order to maintain high standards.
- v. Give presenters and readers feedback, in order to improve individuals’ and Station performance.
- vi. Provide opportunity for members and volunteers (including people with disabilities) to develop skills
- vii. Review mechanisms for retention of volunteers
- viii. Make it easier for Volunteers to be managed and make a difference to their efforts through:

Undertake a check of all equipment used by volunteers to ensure it safe, and can be used intuitively (e.g. although all computers may be compatible they may have slight software or hardware differences which are confusing).

Use the updated Manual in the orientation of new volunteers, and to remind existing volunteers and staff of MBR's rules, regulations and policies under which it operates.

Undertake a Skills Audit of volunteers and Committee: It is recognised that the volunteers and Committee have a range of skills and qualifications beyond what is used in their presenting, production or administrative duties. Better utilising the volunteer resource would benefit both individuals and the Station. Where Skills Gaps are identified on the Committee, additional members can be co-opted.

Undertake a review of the key Station positions (e.g. front desk, technical support, volunteer management, training), with a view to improving flexibility and support of core volunteers

Investigate ways to promote the competence & abilities of people with disabilities through their involvement in Station activities.

TECHNICAL STRATEGIES

3MBR FM has devised a staged infrastructure works program that will see the 3MBR FM's transmission infrastructure upgraded, this will re-instate our full broadcast coverage area and our reach compared to its current coverage area affected by transmission system faults. The planned capital works programme will remedy all these shortcomings. It will also ultimately enable us to participate in the Victorian Government Emergency Broadcast Program.

Most of the financing of such infrastructure upgrading we expect to come initially from CBF grant money, and also subsidised from local funding bodies, state and federal government grants and an increase in revenue from community sponsorship.

The identified capital works consists of:

3MBR FM plans to install diesel back up power generation at the transmitter sites and studios to enable us to provide an emergency radio service (Emergency Warning capability) in the event of a major incident in accordance with the Victorian Government Emergency Broadcasters Program and the South Australian equivalent program.

3MBR FM plans to apply to increase the power and radiation pattern of the Ouyen transmitter to extend the broadcast reach from Ouyen township through to Underbool, along the Mallee Highway enabling full continuity of broadcast along the Mallee Highway.

Studio 3: Situated about 30 kilometres west of Murrayville at the Pinnaroo Primary School Bunday Terrace Pinnaroo, South Australia (currently closed as requires a building **safety** upgrade). – an alternative site nearby is under consideration. The reinstatement of this studio, or an alternative site and facility is identified as a required. Due to limited resources 3MBR FM is unable to maintain, reinstate or replace this studio within the duration of this Plan. It is considered that the OB equipment (discussed in the next paragraph) will be utilised by the students of the four schools within our region.

The radio station currently has no outside broadcasting capabilities at this time. The OB is planned to be utilised at schools, at sporting, community cultural and social events within the region. This plan identifies a need for OB equipment and expenditure is identified in the Financial Budget to purchase the equipment. The students and volunteer operators would be trained in-house.

Planned Capital Works

3MBR FM has developed a major four stage technical upgrade as part of this Plan. The order of priority is in accordance with the Stage numbering. The timing is proposed to be Stage 1 and Stage 2 in Year 1, while Stages 3 and 4 are projected to be completed in Year 2. The actual time span may be reduced or expanded based upon actual conditions and resources available to 3MBR FM in the future.

The forecast and projected expenditure is shown in the appended Budget and is described as “Planned Capital Works expenditure for year “.

Year 1 - \$24,000

Stage 1 (Murrayville) - estimated cost \$18,000

- Replace 6 bay side mounted dipole array at main Tx site.
- Replace Antenna Power Divider.
- Replace antenna feeder cable.
- Upgrade earthing system for mast and feeder cables.
- Remove disused antennas from tower to reduce wind loading.
- Rigging labour contractors will be required for the abovementioned work.
- Provide 3/4G connectivity to site for SCADA and remote control & monitoring system.

Stage 2 (Ouyen) - estimated cost \$8,000

- Replace “receive” 6 element yagi antenna.
- Upgrade transmit antenna to a two-bay side mounted dipole array
- General mast maintenance.
- Installation of a new equipment housing cabinet.
- Associated ground works.
- Rigging labour contractors will be required for the abovementioned work.
- Provide 3/4G connectivity to site for SCADA and remote control & monitoring system.

Year 2 - \$15,000

Stage 3 (Murrayville) - estimated cost \$10,000

- Install digital STL link for full digital path to transmitter input
- Cut over to digital STL for main link

- Purchase low cost FM processor and MPX generator for analog STL (redundancy)
- Rigging labour contractors will be required for the abovementioned work

Stage 4 (Murrayville, centrally based OB unit) - estimated cost \$8,000

- Purchase audio codecs for outside broadcast events
- Purchase other equipment for outside broadcasts
- Obtain at least two outside broadcast kits
- Certificate 3 - Workplace Training and Assessment for proposed Station Manager

Year 3 – programmed maintenance and minor upgrades, projected \$10,000

Year 4 – programmed maintenance and minor upgrades, projected \$10,000

Year 5 - programmed maintenance and minor upgrades, projected \$5,000

EMERGENCY WARNING STRATEGY

3MBR FM recognises that as the sole broadcaster in the major part of this region, it has a duty to serve the community with providing up to date and relevant emergency warnings to persons in the region. From a public safety perspective 3MBR FM must be heard by everyone throughout the region and be able to operate without mains power during times of emergency. The Plan and Financial Budget incorporates acquisitions of assets and the resultant expenditure that must be undertaken to bolster the stations capabilities during an emergency.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM STRATEGY

There are four schools within our region. The schools are situated in the middle of 3MBR FM's broadcast region in the towns of Murrayville and Ouyen in Victoria, and Lameroo and Pinnaroo in South Australia. The schools are publicly funded schools catering for students of all ages, ethnicity and backgrounds. The schools' curriculum covers all the primary and secondary schooling years, R1 – Year 12. The children at those schools, now and in the next five years, represents more than 25% of the region's resident population.

3MBR FM realises the schools as a primary route of engagement within the Community.

Furthermore 3MBR FM acknowledges that our rural children are at a considerable disadvantage to their city-based cohort when it comes to technical and entertainment opportunities, especially in their secondary education years. We believe a schools program will provide a valuable asset for the students and the school curriculum. With the opportunity of “elective” or “after school” classes introducing media presentation, journalism, technical production and broadcast engineering. It is planned that the proposed Station Manager will undertake and complete a Certificate 3 - Workplace Training and Assessment to enable documentable training of interested students.

We envisage giving the youth the opportunity to be involved in numerous aspects of radio broadcasting. Proposing an identifiable outcome of developing skill sets and interests that will form the foundation of their understanding of this field of endeavour, and also more importantly, broaden the students' experiences and outlook on life.

The timing of introduction of the Schools Program, ideally, would start immediately. However there are prerequisites which must be in place first. Schools Program is projected to be implemented in the third or fourth year of this Plan as a consequence of three factors: the appointment of a Station Manager, training and the development of a Student Involvement Program in conjunction with the four schools.

FINANCIAL PLAN & CONTROL STRATEGIES

We believe our track record in meeting financial challenges in the past is a strong one. 3MBR FM aims to maintain our financial viability and remain a sustainable broadcasting station permanently.

Our financial plan reflects our goals and strategies, in particular building capacity by growing

And diversifying our financial base through earned income, grants and donations.

The projected Financial Budget for the five years ended 30 June 2019- 2023 (see Appendix 1) is based on:

A continual modest improvement in sponsorship and earned income with the intention of being self funded from our services within our own region by the end of this Plan (2023).

We propose to seek grant funding towards the cost of the new part time position of Station Manager, likely to be about \$60,000 annually and critical to implementation of this Plan. The work of the Station Manager will give a high priority to maximising our position in the community and the region to generate more income by exploring grants and business opportunities that will build our financial position to guarantee a sustainable future. The Station Manager will also direct capital works developments and the projects: the Emergency Warning facility and the Student **Involvement** Program.

We propose to seek funding of a further \$20,000 per annum in grants to assist with capital works, which will be the base on which to build the Emergency Warning facility and the Student **Involvement** Program.

We will utilise the CBAA Grant-Matching Service to give the station access to grant opportunities from the Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF) and many government and philanthropic funding organisations across Australia including Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services, and state government agencies in Victoria and South Australia.

We will undertake an investigation into additional sources and levels of funding.

- i. Invite corporate memberships.
- ii. Consider how sponsorship might be most effectively acknowledged.

- iii. Establish a tiered sponsorship system, e.g. silver/gold/platinum.
- iv. Approach SA and Victorian Governments, CBF, Community Foundations that provide grants, philanthropic organisations, etc. for funds.

To maintain financial sustainability we will:

As a minimum we aim to hold adequate cash resources (equivalent to 90 days operating costs) at all times to reasonably meet any unforeseen circumstances.

In respect of financial reporting and planning we will:

Annually develop a Financial Plan and Budget as appropriate to fulfil our obligations as a licensed broadcaster and our obligations to our members, employees, volunteers, funding agencies and contractors.

Review reports against our budget at each Committee meeting, along with quarterly reports from our Treasurer.

Review up-to-date reports of our organisation's financial position – a Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet) and Income Statement (Profit and Loss).

Create an Annual Report on our activities and finances.

Have our annual accounts audited, voluntarily, as our Constitution does not require audits

Ensure that we can meet our financial recording and reporting obligations under any Grant Agreements

Keep an up-to-date Asset Register.

Maintain and follow our Financial Control Policies, that documents who can spend our organisation's money and how.

Minimize handling of cash and ensure its receipt is recorded

Securely store a hard copy of station financial records and policies and ensure they are backed up and accessible in both in electronic and hard copy.

Identify strategies to more directly financially support establishment of the projects: Student **Involvement** Program and Emergency Warning capability, including investigate additional avenues for increasing donations, including bequests and

- i. Put a donation box in foyer.
- ii. Conduct more fund raising social functions.
(These must tap into the wider community so that volunteers are not being called on to also support funding of the Station, apart from their membership fees.)
- iii. Investigate the possibility of establishing a Charitable Foundation.

MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Radio 3MBR FM will ensure that our internal and external structures and processes enable us to achieve our Vision and Goals with sound governance.

The 3MBR FM's Committee is responsible for governance of the station, and has also taken responsibility for all management and administration tasks. The Committee principally decides broad policy and strategic directions for 3MBR FM and is required to meet at least six times each year. However, since the management changes made in 2016 it has met more frequently and Committee members have taken on some of the management functions previously performed by staff.

The Committee generally meets monthly, including an annual planning day and the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Committee members do not participate in discussion on any matters where there may be an actual or perceived conflict of interest.

3MBR FM presently has limited management resources, placing heavy responsibilities on the Committee and other volunteers and making our ability to do more for the community difficult. We have identified a critical need to provide an additional staff resource to address this problem.

Employ a part time Station Manager

A new part time Station Manager position will be created if funds allow in 2018/19.

This position will complement the work of existing volunteers and contractors, and have responsibility for developmental work, including sponsorship and other fundraising initiatives, liaising with the general community to implement the this Plan's goals concerning engagement, and financial management. The proposed Station Manager is viewed as a critical addition to facilitate implementation the strategies of 3MBR FM.

Committee members will remain actively involved where possible and appropriate to ensure programs are delivered and the goals and strategies are met subject to available resources.

The Committee will complete the Community Radio Station Health Check on-line, and review the feedback from CBAA (annually, before 31 December)

Review our Policies & Procedures (including relevant Rules and Regulations).

Maintain an updated the Policies Practices and Procedures Manual

Develop a long-term plan for the upgrade and replacement of equipment and assets

Maintain and follow our Risk Management Policies, and in particular:

Review our insurance policies annually to ensure adequate cover

Regular Annual physical review of outdoor structures, dangerous equipment and all electrical equipment

BACKGROUND - TECHNICAL

The Radio Service 3MBR FM is broadcasting from Murrayville on 103.5FM and Ouyen on 92.9FM in Victoria, Lameroo on 107.5FM and Pinnaroo on 103.5FM in South Australia and extends throughout the Mallee Border region of Australia. An FM transmitter at Murrayville in north west Victoria serves the Mallee Border districts of Victoria and South Australia including Murrayville and Cowangie in the Mildura Rural City Council in Victoria, and Pinnaroo and Parilla in the Mallee District Council in South Australia. 3MBR FM is heard in Ouyen in Victoria via a translator. Lameroo in South Australia is served by another translator.

The station's transmitter is situated seven kilometres south of Murrayville; it has a 63 metre high mast which accommodates a six-element vertical dipole array. 3MBR FM broadcasts in stereo, on a frequency of 103.5mhz and its radiated signal is vertically polarised, with an omnidirectional pattern. The ERP is rated at 3kw. There are two translators, one in Ouyen on 92.9mhz and another in Lameroo on 107.5mhz.

There are two broadcasting studios which are geographically apart. All are all directly linked to the transmitter. The studios are located in Murrayville, and the other located at Pinnaroo. The studio sites are:

Studio 1: Situated at Francis Street Murrayville, Victoria;

Studio 2: Situated about 30 kilometres west of Murrayville at the Pinnaroo Primary School Bunday Terrace Pinnaroo, South Australia (currently closed as requires a building **safety** upgrade). This is discussed in Technical Strategies on page **10**.

As 3MBR FM was one of the first Community broadcasters in Victoria, with its first transmissions in December 1982, sadly the transmission infrastructure has not been upgraded and we are currently experiencing a number of transmission system faults. The remedial work planned to be undertaken is discussed in Technical Strategies on page **10**.

BACKGROUND - MARKET

Content

3MBR FM is the sole radio received by people throughout the majority of this region. Consequently it broadcasts a variety of programs to suit the widest range of listeners. The program schedule was updated in 2018. A copy of the current tabulated schedule is attached as Appendix 2 – Program Schedule.

Website

Full details of our programs can be accessed at www.3MBRFM.org.au. The website provides

comprehensive program information, news of upcoming events and information about the organisation including our presenters and key personnel.

Audience

The community which 3MBR FM serves is mainly agricultural, quite small residential population (4,061 persons, ABS Census 2016), geographically large (762 Km² plus the Ouyen district). The median age is 49 -50. The age demographics of the resident population have a similar dispersion to the wider community in Australia with the exception of a hollowing out of the 20-34 age groups. The 20-34 age group appear to leave the region seeking further education, training and employment.

The ABS 2016 Census data shows the age distribution (simplified) of residents in the Mallee Border region compared to the age distribution of the population of Australia as a whole. The result is presented in the table:

Age distribution of residents

Age range	MBR region	Australia
0-19	24.6%	24.8%
20-34	12.4%	21.0%
35-64	39.3%	38.6%
over 64	23.7%	15.6%
	100.0%	100.0%

While this region has grown between the 2011 Census and 2016 Census, the region continues to have community challenges prevalent in many rural and remote areas.

In addition to the resident population there is a large itinerant multinational “back packer” workforce (estimated at between 2-300 by an industry source) is engaged in the region during planting and harvest periods. The region includes the largest potato and onion horticultural industry in Australia. Due to the limited resources of 3MBR FM it is unable to directly tailor its programming to embrace the non english speaking itinerant workers at this time. 3MBR FM acknowledges this as an item for improvement in the future.

The region includes the Mallee and Sunraysia Highways and cuts across four large significant public parks. The parks are Murray-Sunset National Park (633,000 HA), Wyperfeld National Park

(361,000 HA) in Victoria, and Karte Consevation Park and the Ngarkat Conservation Park in South Australia.

The parks offer unique semi-arid and desert experiences and four wheel drive tracks to tourists. The parks are only four to five hours by road from the large population centres surrounding Melbourne and Adelaide. The local tourist authorities have estimated that the parks attract a further 15,000 people to the region each year.

The Mallee Highway is the main transport link between Adelaide and Sydney. The Sunraysia Highway is the main transport link between Melbourne the significant population centres of and Mildura and Broken Hill, and the wider Murray River and western New South Wales regions. Drivers and passengers on both those highways, and lesser roads, are our audience as they pass through our broadcast region. The number of persons has not been accurately estimated at this time. It has been identified that signage placed on the highways would make travellers aware of our services. While identified, currently the introduction of highway signage for 3MBR FM is outside this Plan due to our limited resources.

BACKGROUD - COMPETITORS

3MBR FM is considered to have no substantial local radio broadcast competition in its region. Other than 3MBR FM's radio service, it in the opinion of the community, the region is served poorly by both the commercial radio broadcasters and ABC and SBS radio. Most of the region falls into a non broadcast area of commercial and public radio stations. Under favourable reception conditions, infrequently, other distant radio transmissions may be received in the region. This could be classified as "fortuitous" reception in this region and by its nature is highly unreliable. In addition to 3MBR FM, only a commercial station, Flow FM, has any constant coverage in the region. Flow FM uses a remote satellite-fed repeater, with limited coverage at Pinnaroo, and extending only **20** kilometres beyond the township of Pinnaroo. Flow's content appears to be produced without consideration of relevance to our local community. Even a substantial portion of Flow's advertising appears to be aimed at other regions.

As a medium of general entertainment the station has broad completion from other pervasive communication media: television and on-line services. None of these services directly tailor their content to the people in our region. Due to the remoteness of the region these other media are limited by content, variety and access. Most of the people in our region only have these services through the VAST network. The NBN service is projected to reach the region **2018**

We have to maintain and expand and have a broad and wide scope to our content of news information and entertainment to cater for and embrace all in the region.

3MBR FM has identified that it services should be enhanced and expanded by on-line streaming of radio content but believes, at the time of this Plan, it will not have sufficient financial resources to establish and operate an on line streaming service.

BACKGROUND – REORGANISATION 2016-2018

3MBR FM's Committee after consultation with the community viewed that the Station needed an overhaul, from top to bottom.

At that time it did not meet the criteria of “professional management” to be eligible for CBF grants. 3MBR FM applied to local bodies to obtain modest funding to finance the reconstruction of the studio, transmission path and program and volunteer management.

Over the last two years we have rebuilt the studios and ensured all assets are wired to broadcast standard, introduced new computers and NAS storage devices, new automation software, created an IP data network, purchased an excellent FM processor and composite MPX generator. A new dedicated production area nears completion (as at 30 June 2018). We have had new promos, new station IDs and other announcements created. We have introduced an hourly news and sports update service.

As part of the Reorganisation 3MBR FM has developed a greater variety of programs for broadcast, to ensure that services provided are appropriate (e.g. meeting the age, religion, sex, culture, and diversity) for listeners. It has:

- increased the range of music played and placed genres in identifiable daily and weekly scheduled time slots

- provided programs of interest to younger listeners

- reduced the number of repeated programs.

A copy of the current tabulated weekly program schedule is attached as Appendix 2 – Program Schedule.

We believe 3MBR FM is now well placed to move forward and achieve the goals set in this Business Plan.

3MBR FM now sounds as good as a capital city commercial FM stations and the community are back listening to 3MBR FM and taking it seriously. Sponsorship is rising as we now have more businesses wanting to sponsor 3MBR FM. We have regained the trust and interest of the community. For the first time in nearly eighteen years the community and businesses are back listening and supporting 3MBR FM's cleaned up the transmission signal and changed playlist. This was the final step towards fully engaging with the community and fully regaining their support.

APPENDIX 1 – Financial Budget for the years ending 30 June 2019-2023

MALLEE COMMUNITY BROADCASTERS INCORPORATED

ABN 46 337 038 056

(Mallee Border Radio)

Forecast and projected Income and Expenditure Budget Statement

	years ending 30 June:	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
<u>Income</u>						
Donations		7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000
Fundraising		1,000	1,030	1,061	1,093	1,126
Grants		50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Insurance recoveries		-	-	-	-	-
Interest Received		47	115	211	277	237
Memberships		1,000	1,300	1,690	2,197	2,856
Sponsorship		10,000	13,000	16,900	21,970	28,561
Rent Received		8,000	8,240	8,487	8,742	9,004
Total income		77,047	80,685	85,349	91,278	98,784
<u>Less Expenses</u>						
Audit Fees		500	515	530	546	563
Depreciation – non cash item		-	-	-	-	-
Fundraising Expenses		-	-	-	-	-
Insurance		1,000	1,030	1,061	1,093	1,126
Licences, Permits & Memberships		3,705	4,204	4,843	5,655	6,683
Light & Power		7,000	7,210	7,426	7,649	7,879
Office Expenses		1,000	1,030	1,061	1,093	1,126
Program Costs		2,500	2,575	2,652	2,732	2,814
Repairs & Maintenance		-	-	-	-	-
Replacement Equipment		-	-	-	-	-
Station Staffing Expenses (proposed position)		30,000	39,000	50,700	65,910	70,000
Unallocated Minor Expenses		500	515	530	546	563
Total expenses		46,205	56,079	68,804	85,224	90,752
Cash inflow (outflow) from ordinary activities		30,841	24,606	16,545	6,054	8,032
Less Planned Capital Works expenditure for year		24,000	15,000	10,000	10,000	5,000
add Opening cash resources		4,667	11,508	21,115	27,660	23,714
Closing cash resources		11,508	21,115	27,660	23,714	26,745
Cash resources, days of Total Expenses		90	137	147	102	108

The cash resources of MBR represent the working capital of the Station. As a minimum it is aimed to hold the amount equivalent to 90 days total operating expenditure so that unforeseen circumstances can reasonably be met immediately from cash reserves.

APPENDIX 2 – Program Schedule

3MBR FM Program Guide July 2018

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
00:00	BBC World News						Saturday Night Juke Box
	Curved Radio (live)	Bohemian Beat	Nothin' but the Blues	Under African Skies	Pop Heads	Amrap Radio Program	
01:00	Indij Hip Hop	The Tiki Lounge pt1	New Releases	Roots n Reggae Show	Definition Radio	Live Delay	Tecka's Rock and Blues Show
02:00	Jazz Made in Australia	The Tiki Lounge pt2	New York Jazz	A Jazz Hour	The Breeze	Contact!	Beale Street Caravan
03:00	The Phantom Dancer	Hot, Sweet & Jazzy		Let The Bands Play	Sentimental Mood	Aussie Music Weekly	It's Time
04:00	Living in the 60s	Spotlight	Off the Record	Beale Street Caravan	Dirt Music	Playback	Bluesbeat
05:00	BBC World News						
	Good Morning Country (live)					Folk Show	Country folk Around Australia (live)
	The best in country music to kickstart your morning					Saturday Breakfast (live)	
	Incorporating Rural Livestock 05:30, Rural Outlook 05:45 & Rural News 06:05						
08:00	Victorian News					Real World Gardener	Sentimental Mood
	Classic Hits						
09:00	South Australian News					News	Classic Hits
	Health Check with Dr. Hammond						
	Classic Hits					Cruise & Travel Show	Classic Hits
10:00	Victorian News						
	New Country					News	Oldies
11:00	South Australian News						
	BBC "Witness" Historic News					Oldies	Oldies
	New Country						
12:00	Midday News & World News					News	
	Classic Hits					The Mike McColl Show (Live)	If That Ain't Country, Traditional Country music with "Western Red"
13:00	News						
	Classic Hits						
14:00	News						
	BBC "Witness" Historic News						
	New Country					News	News
15:00	News						
	New Country					News	John Heintze "Down Memory Lane" (Live)
16:00	News						
	Classic Hits			Melomania Hosted by Scad, Hollie and Troy		Classic Rock	John Heintze "Down Memory Lane" (Live)
17:00	News					News	
	Classic Hits			New Country			

Mallee Border Radio – 3MBR FM

18:00	News						
	Big Band	Blues	If That Ain't Country, Traditional Country music with "Western Red" (Repeat)	Guitar Legends	Hot 30 Hits Matty counts down the Hottest 30 songs in Australia as voted by you	Country	
19:00	News			News		Saturday Night Juke Box	News
	Big Band	Blues		Guitar Legends			Wally Wray's Country (Live)
20:00	News			News			
	Big Band	Blues	Guitar Legends				
21:00	News						
	The Master Tapes			Jamming Country Country Rock and jamming sessions			
	Classic Rock			Jamming Country Country Rock			
22:00	News						
	Classic Rock			Jamming Country Country Rock			
23:00	News						
00:00	Overnight Playlist			Jamming Country Country Rock			

COMPLEMENTARY POLICIES

The management of all resources of 3MBR FM including staff, volunteers and programming is guided by the following policies, which are incorporated in a Policies Practices and Procedures Manual which is reviewed and updated regularly:

Corporate Governance Policies

Financial Control Policies

Risk Management Policies

Community Participation Policies - including community consultation strategy and structured engagement program

Grievance and Complaints Handling Policies – listeners, volunteers, staff and members

Internal conflict Policies

Internet and on-line Policies – under consideration and development

Membership Policies

Programming Policies - including Australian content music

Position Description Policy

Privacy Principles

Sponsorship Policies

Station Handbook covers the Station Principles including on Access and equity, Anti-discrimination, Newsletters, Noticeboards

Staff Policies – under preparation

Training Manual - also acts as induction manual

Volunteering Policies - including Rights and Responsibilities of Volunteers, and Training /Induction manual

We continually maintain up to date:

Register of complaints

Register of conflicts of interest of Committee members

Register of financial members

Diagram of the organisation structure

We often refer, for guidance, to:

Community Radio Broadcasting Codes of Practice

Code Of Practice Checklist

Broadcasting Services Act 1992 (Commonwealth)

Radio Communications Act (Commonwealth)

Associations Incorporation Act (Victoria)

NOTE: Securely store a hard copy of station records and documents, financial records and policy manuals and ensure they are backed up and accessible in both in electronic and hard copy.

Guiding Principles

Community broadcasters are united by six guiding principles.

We will work to:

1. Promote harmony and diversity and contribute to an inclusive, cohesive and culturally diverse Australian community
2. Pursue the principles of democracy, access and equity, especially for people and issues not adequately represented in other media

3. Enhance the diversity of programming choices available to the public and present programs that expand the variety of viewpoints broadcast in Australia
4. Demonstrate independence in programming as well as in editorial and management decisions
5. Support and develop local arts and music
6. Increase community involvement in broadcasting.

END

3MBR FM Business Plan 2019-2023 DRAFT-1.doc