

Recipient: Hon. Malcolm Turnbull

Letter: Greetings,

To the Hon Malcolm Turnbull
Minister for Broadband and Communications
Ground Floor
287-289 New South Head Road
EDGECLIFF NSW 2027

RE LICENSING OF 2PR FM FOR SYDNEY AREA

Dear Mr Turnbull,

I wish to take this opportunity to remind you of the imperative need for the licensing of 2PR FM in Sydney. Referring to the submission I submitted to parliament during 2012, and the petition currently active on change.org, you can see that this is a rather pressing issue that's gaining momentum.

Despite completing my HSC in the late 80s, several work experiences, courses (both private and TAFE), and side projects, I have found it impossible to locate any paid work. This is also considering that I've signed with numerous job agencies, and have made tens of thousands of job applications. I feel very much this is due to both my Asperger's Syndrome and visual impairment. Employers feel that these things contribute to higher insurance costs and OH&S risks, particularly when it comes to my low vision.

Someone with Asperger's Syndrome would find the elements of a modern workplace such as tight deadlines, multitasking, interpreting facial expressions, and intuition very hard to understand. This causes anxiety and in many cases a break-down in work-place relationships. With this in mind, understanding for those with the condition in an open employment situation is poor to non existent. Conventional thinking is that the person with Asperger's just has to adapt and fit in. This attitude is equivalent to expecting a wheelchair-bound person to walk whether they like it or not - This mentality is unacceptable but is unfortunately wide-spread.

It is very important to emphasise that I'm NOT just another guy who wants to start

a station for playing his music - 2PR FM will be a voice for those with a disability. I'm currently part of both the NSW Aspect group and People With Disabilities (PWD), and regularly take part in their meetings. I also have a number of friends who suffer from various disabilities. Beside the lack of understanding and support for those with a disability (mainly those with Asperger's Syndrome), is the complete absence of any large scale platform to voice these concerns. Though the internet to a degree can be used to air such issues (such as facebook, twitter and blogs), the cluttered and fragmented nature of such a platform makes it difficult for a group to gain a focus like a radio station can.

Therefore the time for introducing 2PR FM could not be more apt then the present, as the station would present both a historical music format from an archival playlist of thousands of tracks, plus draw awareness to disabilities and special needs issues - two extremely important and desired components missing from Sydney radio programming.

An officer from the Department of Broadband and Communications told me in a telephone conversation that "Sydney's FM radio spectrum is full". Though this is true to a large degree, I've pointed out how this issue could be resolved in my submission with changing one or two stations around. Their reply letter also stated; "The broadcast license regime ensures equity in the allocation of broadcasting licenses which utilize a finite and valuable public resource; radio frequency spectrum". The letter also noted; "Broadcasting licenses, especially in large metropolitan markets such as Sydney are highly sought after. The broadcasting legislation requires licenses to be allocated via a priced based system (auction). There are no plans to change this".

They feel that introducing my Clause H License "would require significant changes to the broadcast licensing regime". Again, I disagree with this as once more these issues were pointed out, particularly in part two of my license submission. Judging by the short reply I received back from the department, and the lack of response from the previous Minister Senator Stephen Conroy, I don't even know if my submission has been read or taken seriously. The lack of correspondence I've experienced demonstrates an attitude that those with a disability face to often.

During the recent election campaign, there was a concerted effort on raising the profile of 2PR FM. This involved sending community service announcements to Channel 7 and Channel 9. Proposals of syndicating 2PR FM were also sent to FBI radio and 2RPH, however correspondence received back from all these media outlets noted that my proposals were declined. The need for such a station was also pitched as a news story to the 7:30 Report on ABC Television. The editor liked the idea of such a concept, but informed me that the programs roster had been commissioned for the foreseeable future. Not being able to get my station's election campaign aired on any of these outlets demonstrates again how disability

issues are completely shut out.

Listening to ABC radio and some of the other stations in Sydney in recent days highlights the vital need for 2PR. The issues discussed were asylum seekers, carbon taxes, how politicians perform in the polls, Afghanistan, and lifestyle shows (gardening, travels, real estate, and renovations). Aside from the occasional mention of the Disability Insurance Scheme, the airtime dedicated to disability issues is rather insignificant.

Us disability people generally feel that we are still living in the Australia of the 1940's where such issues are deliberately hush hushed. During a recent meeting with an MP's secretary, I was told about the invaluable need for the business service centres for the disabled, a point at which I wanted to fall to the floor in her office. After informing her that these places pay disability workers around \$1.70 an hour (ABC PM report 08/04/2011), she continued with how these places get disability people out of home and into work. I could not believe her ignorance. This is third world treatment that disability people receive here in Australia.

Only recently I was offered a Housing NSW property that did not remotely meet my required needs. The stairwell was dark, the structures like stairs, paths, and service areas were dangerous to negotiate, the building had no security, and ultimately the complex was well known for drug addicts. Every attempt of me trying to improve my circumstances has been stymied by government bureaucracy. I often have this overwhelming feeling of being an invisible person and would love to yell out to them, "Hello, I'm here, we have needs like everyone else, give us a chance".

Anyone I try to speak to in a position of any authority never has the time to speak to me - they are always off to a meeting, require me to send an e-mail which goes unanswered, or more commonly they are just not available. When it comes to my friends however, and acquaintances in the community they are always interested, and want to know how they can help. It would be nice if someone in a government position could adopt such a co-operative attitude. Instead we are met with indifference and apathy.

This issue is now gathering momentum, more and more people are becoming involved. They are many votes in this, and maybe it might motivate some action from you and others in getting 2PR FM licensed - I sincerely hope so as we have become sick to death of being ignored.

I would very much appreciate some dialog with you on the implementation of this issue and look forward to hear from you soon.

Mark Boerebach

Station Administrator
<http://www.2prfm.com>

Comments

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Melissa Allen	Australia	2012-11-04	He is a man who needs a fair go in life. He has a passion for music and has never had a paid job due to many businesses not employing people with disabilities.
Michael Davis	Australia	2012-11-04	It is of paramount importance that those with a disability should be able to access, participate and have a voice in the community to highlight pressing needs that are generally overlooked by the majority.
Warren deWit	Australia	2012-11-04	Radio has been Mark's life long goal, one that he's never given up on. His wealth of knowledge in music and the issues relating to the disabled need to be shared with the community.
John Maddocks	Springwood, Australia	2012-11-04	The need for this station is paramount and Mark is absolutely the right person to be organising this initiative.
Marcel Boerebach	Australia	2012-11-05	Mark has been dedicated to providing Sydney with a radio station since his love for music as a young boy. He has put everyone in their place with his knowledge on the ABC's Rock Quiz and is, as Glenn a Baker said, "an absolute genius". To not have these qualities available to the public for their enjoyment and also Marks is a waste of Talent. A result would give many disabled people the courage to follow their dreams whatever their disability and show that persistence and motivation can be extremely rewarding.
Ben Boerebach	Australia	2012-11-05	I currently work with the Government Agencies that support people with a disability, and the idea of granting a FM Licence for a radio station dedicated to people with a disability is 'brilliant' on a number of levels. A median where their voice can be heard, topics discussed and debated that relates, without the imposed constraints of commercial programming, and where Government may even learn something, with the most part uninterrupted music. It's Mark's passion to be a radio broadcaster spokesperson is a life long dream, relentless in his pursuit for equality, who lives his disabilities every day, diagnosed with Aspergers, and experiencing first hand the discrimination placed on our less fortunate makes this "as we say" Fairdinkum Aussie, and the RIGHT thing to do.
Ann Reid	Australia	2012-11-05	This would benefit many.
Lorraine Lehman-Jones	Wollongong, Australia	2012-11-05	Open up the world for the disabled
Yoke Kueen Stone	Australia	2012-11-05	Right to meaningful and dignified occupation is essential to everyone but specially so to people with disabilities. A very worthwhile course to promote.
Ed Novy	Australia	2012-11-07	Anything to make life that little bit better for people with disabilities is a step in the right direction.
laura davis	Gosford, Australia	2012-11-08	Everybody should have equal rights... And this is a fantastic platform for those with a disability, to express their opinions and be heard. Whilst also enjoying great 70 s music.
Rebecca Smith	Australia	2012-11-08	I think this is a fantastic opportunity for disabled people to get specialised information that is relevant in a very accessible way whilst enjoying music and a relaxed vibe. My Nanna who is blind would benefit from this greatly.
John Humphries	Australia	2012-11-08	Everyone should be given a fair go and freedom of speech.
Bryce Weiley	Australia	2012-11-08	This is important to me as everyone is entitled to equal opportunities in all jobs.
Catherine Sherlock	Australia	2012-11-13	It makes sense

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Paula Romberg	Australia	2012-11-15	A community should celebrate and encourage all of its members to thrive, grow and achieve. Alternative radio stations encourage communication and awareness.
Shane Stanton	Columbus, OH	2012-11-19	I always felt a bit isolated from my classmates. I was not diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome until I was 17. Social interactions are not as easy for me compared to the rest of my family, or welcomed. I easily relate to Mark's enthusiasm. Not only do I love golf, there have been times where the golf course seemed to be the only safe place. Mark's passion for and knowledge about radio is outstanding. Therefore no justification exists for keeping Mark and his friends from earning a living, doing what they love, just because they are disabled. Everyone deserves a chance to pursue their dreams.
Tony Sander	MARLESTON, Australia	2012-12-10	2PR currently does a good job of servicing one of its target audiences (music enthusiasts), but an FM licence would help them service their other target audience (people with disabilities). It would add a genuine alternative voice that Sydney (and Australia) desperately lacks on radio.
Matthew Richer	Australia	2013-01-07	To raise disability awareness.
Suzan K WRIGHT	Sydney, Australia	2013-01-16	It's important to me as a person with a disability, supporting others with disabilities as a civil advocate, to have a forum to raise awareness about issues, be able to generate support, tap into an existing forum and be heard as a collaborative voice ~ all whilst listening to great music!
greg hayes	Ipswich, United Kingdom	2013-02-07	its simply great & esy to listen to here in the uk / ps i was born i9n sydney so reminds me of home
elias abdo	Australia	2013-05-28	great music
mary boerebach	Australia	2013-07-03	Many handicapped people could benefit from this project.. It would be an enormous boost to their confidence and sense of achievement. It wouldn't cost the government anything except some goodwill which hopefully now that the rows have died down there should be plenty of.
Matt Street	Australia	2013-09-10	Son with Autism