



# SHIRE OF BODDINGTON

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All communications to be addressed to the Chief Executive Officer

*"The Council and Staff of the Shire of Boddington, in partnership with the community, are committed to operating effectively and efficiently to provide quality lifestyle opportunities that encourage population growth and development"*

Your Ref:

Our Ref: 11.12.1

Enquiries:

The General Manager  
Digital Broadcasting  
Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts  
GPO Box 2154  
Canberra ACT 2601

To Whom It May Concern:

## **RE – Digital Conversion of Self Help Television Retransmission Sites**

Thank you for allowing the Shire of Boddington to make comment on the digital conversion of the self-help television retransmission sites.

The Shire of Boddington along with many other Council's currently transmit four television stations being ABC, SBS, GWN and WIN plus one FM radio station. The current town site house numbers is estimated at 500 but this is expected to increase sharply over the next two years. This current service is provided through four separate transmission systems from one site unlike many more rural Council's who have multiple sites. To replace this equipment would potentially cost Council \$130 - \$140,000 and the ratepayers would then be forced to purchase digital receivers for older style televisions and potentially new antennas.

It is perceived that digital television is not of a high importance to many of the ratepayers and if refusal to purchase digital receivers is met then Council may be forced to transmit in both analogue and digital. This would considerably increase the work load to Council officers maintaining the system and the cost to Council would greatly increase.

Without grant funding to assist the Shire of Boddington it will be difficult for Council to raise the funds to pay for the conversion and would either equate to a rate increase of 12% or a loan would need to be raised increasing rates by a estimated 3% over the duration of the loan. The equipment that Council currently has deployed is not able to be utilised for the digital conversion and once all sites are forced to convert this equipment will be redundant and worthless.

For the Shire of Boddington, it is perceived that the best course of action for the department is to provide funding to replace the existing equipment allowing Council to continue the transmission of the television station in both analogue and digital. This will allow the more senior residents and the less financially astute to continue with their current equipment whilst the ratepayers with newer televisions or who wish to purchase the equipment to receive digital can enjoy the benefits.

If you have any queries in relation to this issue, require further information, or would like to meet to discuss the issue please do not hesitate to contact me at the Shire office on 9883 8004.

Yours sincerely

Aaron Cook  
Director of Finance  
12 July 2007