

# EARLY AUSTRALIAN SHORTWAVE BROADCAST STATIONS

The era of experimental shortwave broadcasting in Australia extended from 1924 to 1939. In September 1939 the Australian Government cancelled 4CM-TV and all experimental radio licences, including shortwave, due to security concerns with WWII.

- \* Australia's first fully licensed broadcast (non-commercial) station, **2CM** Sydney (1-12-1922) moved to shortwave on 21-2-1924.
- \* When commercial station **2KY** in Sydney was opened on 31-10-1925, the original press release included the planning of a shortwave transmitter to cover all of Australia and overseas. The P.M.G. never approved this idea.
- \* Another attempt at obtaining a shortwave license was implemented by commercial station **5CL** in Adelaide in 1928. They sought a license allowing them to cover all of South Australia, but the P.M.G. also refused this application.
- \* In 1925 Walter Coxon, the Chief Engineer of then commercial station **6WF** in Perth, relayed their programs through his own shortwave station **6AG**. The purpose was to allow **6WF** to be heard throughout all of Western Australia. **6AG** started with 50 watts; later increasing to 200 watts.
- \* In 1926 Ray Allsop, the Chief Engineer of then commercial station **2BL** in Sydney, relayed their programs through his own shortwave station **2YG**. The purpose was to allow **2BL** to be heard throughout all of Eastern Australia and New Zealand.
- \* In 1928 **2GB** decided to test shortwave transmissions with the idea of relaying their programs to other stations around Australia, instead of paying for expensive landlines. These tests were never approved by the P.M.G.
- \* Also in 1928, L.G. Glew, the Chief Engineer of commercial station **3UZ** in Melbourne, relayed their programs through his own shortwave station **3LG**. The purpose was to allow **3UZ** to be heard throughout Victoria and Tasmania. The **3LG** transmitter started with 150 watts and soon increased to 500 watts, operating on 9,725 KHz.
- \* In these early years, A.W.A. operated three shortwave stations:
  - \* The first A.W.A. shortwave broadcast station appears to be **2ME** in Sydney. On 5-9-1927, with a 20,000 watt transmitter, they relayed the first Empire Broadcast from **2FC** in Sydney. This program was received and then relayed on mediumwave stations throughout India, South Africa, the United Kingdom, Canada, and the U.S.A. Also in 1927 they were the first Australian station to experiment with F.M. (mono only, using shortwave 9 MHz.)
  - \* Also in 1927, **2UW** in Sydney used **2ME** to relay their programs to their temporary Wagga Wagga station **2UX** one day each week.
  - \* The second A.W.A. shortwave station was **3ME** in Melbourne, which actually started on mediumwave. From 1927 they relayed the then commercial station **3LO** until A.W.A. established their own studio and programming. Their target audience was international. Centenary celebrations in 1934 from Ballarat were broadcast by **3DB** in Melbourne and also relayed on shortwave through **3ME**. **3ME** was also the forerunner of 'Radio Australia' (which was first known as 'Australia Calling').
  - \* In 1928 **3LO** Melbourne experimented with shortwave by covering all of Victoria every Monday.
  - \* **3UZ** Melbourne experimented with shortwave broadcasts for brief periods in 1930 and 1931 using 150 watts.
  - \* The third A.W.A. shortwave station was **6ME** in Perth. They first went on air on 27-1-1936 with a 200 watt transmitter. Their programming came from their own A.W.A. studio and was designed to target an international audience.
  - \* Between 1937 and 1939 commercial station **5AD** in Adelaide covered all of South Australia on shortwave using the callsign **5DI**.
  - \* **2BH** Broken Hill broadcast several WWII Relief Concerts which were relayed on shortwave by the Royal Flying Doctor Service.
  - \* **6KG** Kalgoorlie was heard experimenting on 4,835 KHz. in a failed attempt to cover Perth.
- \* Finally, an unusual shortwave event. H.M.S. Grenville, while patrolling the Pacific in 1946, relayed **2KY** Sydney using a shortwave transmitter. The purpose was to provide some entertainment to other H.M.S. ships throughout the Pacific.

