

Northern Territory A.M. Radio Stations

Part of the most comprehensive list ever compiled of Australian A.M. broadcasting stations.

5DR Darwin 11-02-1944. Darwin Radio. Established at a cost of £2,000, and operated by the Army to entertain our troops during WWII, with the 1500 KHz. transmitter at Cemetery Plains. The Commanding Officer was Lieutenant Brian Wright; an announcer from **2GB**. The former EMI studios in Homebush, Sydney, were reopened to produce records for all the army stations, with **2GB** providing transcription programs. They also relayed programs from the B.B.C. and the A.B.C. via a shortwave receiver at Leanyer. They produced their own variety style song and comedy program every Saturday night in front of the troops. On air 0600-0900 and 1630-0100. Often heard in New Zealand. Lieutenant Lionel Lunn from **2GB**, and Sergeant Len Maugher (later at **3AW**, then head of the Nine TV network), were their announcers. Closed on 8-2-1946 with the transmitter being maintained by P.M.G. technician Ken Soare. Taken over by the A.B.C. on 12-3-1947, using 200 watts (2,000 watts in 1952). On air 0700-1000, 1200-1400, and 1800-2230 until 1960. Live programs included local sport, dances, and plays. They only had one announcer until 1960, as most programs were on relay from Adelaide. Changed their callsign to **8DR** on 5-7-1960, then later to **8RN**.



5AL Adelaide River 03-1944. Army station. Relay of **5DR**. Closed on 8-2-1946. This callsign was later allocated to an A.B.C. station in Alice Springs on 30-11-1948.

5AL Alice Springs 30-11-1948. A.B.C. Started as a relay of **5CL**, with studios situated next to the Court House. On air 0630-1000, 1200-1430, and 1700-2230. Changed their callsign to **8AL** on 5-7-1960, and became a relay of **8DR** with some local programs. Now covers all of inland Australia with a separate short wave service. Callsign **5AL** was first allocated to an Army station at Adelaide River in March 1944.

5KN Katherine 05-06-1960. A.B.C. Relay of **5DR**. Changed their callsign to **8KN** on 5-7-1960.

5TC Tennant Creek 11-06-1960. A.B.C. Relay of **5AL**. Changed their callsign to **8TC** on 5-7-1960.

8DR Darwin 05-07-1960. A.B.C. (See **5DR** 11-2-1944). Darwin Radio. Off the air for 34 hours after Cyclone Tracy cut their landline to their transmitter on 25-12-1974. Back on air using a landline from their studio to Melbourne, feeding a Radio Australia shortwave transmitter at Lyndhurst, and back to a receiver at their Darwin transmitter site. Changed to 8DDD FM in October 1990.



8DN Darwin 12-12-1960. Licensed on 12-2-1960. Owned by Doug Charlton (see **7DY**).

Organised annual Rock Eisteddfods with Northern Territory bands. Put off the air on 25-12-1974 by cyclone Tracy. They borrowed a spare transmitter from **8HA** which was delivered by the Army to hasten the restoration of all emergency communications. On 1-7-78 they were taken over by 25 intruders stating on air that they had established an emergency interim government. Opened a relay transmitter at Katherine in 1981. Converted to stereo on 1-12-1983. Launched 8HOT FM in 1991. Their manager, knowing that the station was having financial problems, established another company to take over the licence. He was eventually sacked, and on 23-10-1991 the stations' chairman sought a court injunction to prevent the sacked manager from entering the station. Had to close **8DN** on 14-2-1992 due to a lack of advertising, and a contravention of Australian Broadcasting Tribunal regulations. The **8DN** frequency was later used by the A.B.C. as **8RN**.

? **Darwin 1971.** Established at Berry Springs by the Northern Territory Emergency Service, to provide information to the public during emergencies. Radio Australia (P.M.G.) technicians operated the transmitter. Closed in June 1991.



8HA Alice Springs 02-03-1971. Was to open as **8NT** (Northern Territory), then **8CA** (Central Australia), before opening as **8HA** (Heart of Australia). Started by Eddie Connellan (founder of Connair) and George Brown (Director of the Royal Flying Doctor Base). To speed up the opening date, S.T.C. used a DC6 aeroplane to deliver the technical equipment. Purchased **4VL** in 1984, and sold it in 1986. Purchased **4KZ** in 1987. Still owned by the first 23 shareholders. Their slogan was "Broadcasting to Central Australia". Now has an F.M. relay at Uluru (Ayers Rock). (In 1947 the P.M.G. refused an application from the Alice Springs newspaper to launch a commercial station there).

8GO Gove (Nhulunbuy) 12-1974. A.B.C. Originally received **8DR** programs using a three hop tropospheric link from Darwin. They now receive their programs via satellite.

8JB Jabiru 1980. A.B.C. Relay of **8DR**.

Letter to the Editor:

"Dear 5DR Darwin. Congratulations on an achievement. The people of Darwin thank you for bringing to us one of the most essential amenities of modern life".

Letter to the Editor, 13-3-1947, on the opening of 5DR.

(Photo is their early AR7 Short wave receivers, used for relaying some ABC and BBC programs).

