



Ethnic Broadcasters' Council Policy and Procedures Manual

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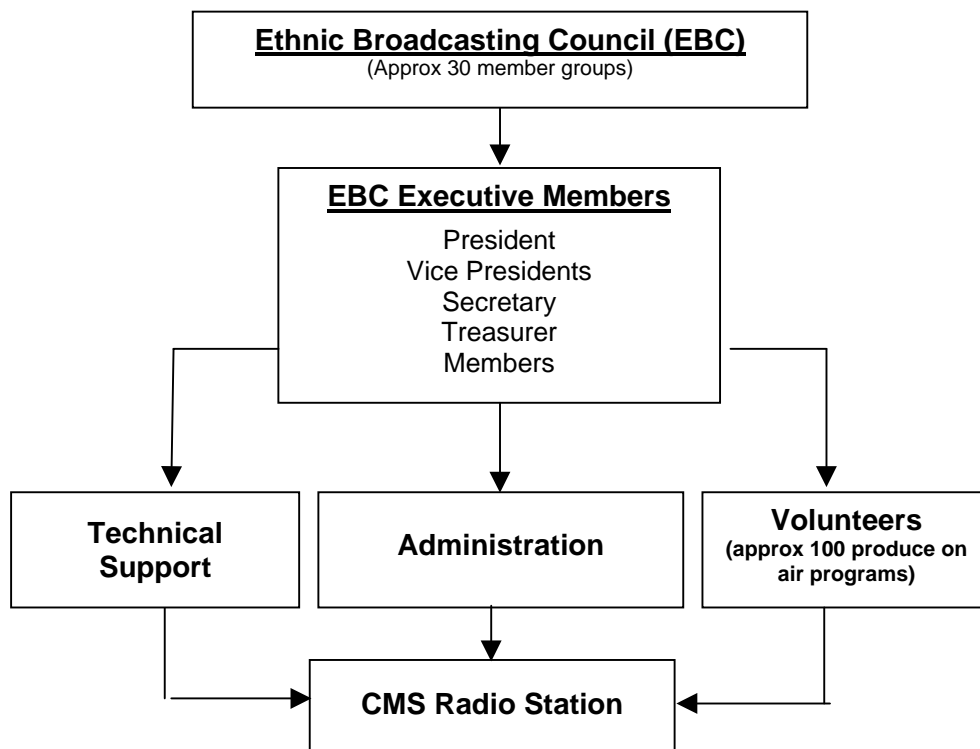
Ethnic Broadcasters' Council Policy and Procedures

1. Background

The Ethnic Broadcasters' Council of the ACT and Surrounding Districts Inc. (EBC) was incorporated in 1977 and promotes the interests of ethnic broadcasting for and by the ethnic communities in Canberra.

The Ethnic Broadcasters' Council was incorporated as a non-profit organisation in 1977 and has been on the air since 1993. EBC was granted a permanent community radio broadcasting licence on 15 July 2000. The EBC has overall responsibility for running of the Canberra Multicultural Service (CMS) on 91.7FM which operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and is currently broadcasting in 35 languages with a pool of at least 86 broadcasters and around 15 volunteers. CMS has two fully functional broadcast studios located at the Grant Cameron Community Centre, Holder with a transmitter on Black Mountain. Individual broadcasters are responsible for producing their own programs.

2. Organisational Structure



3. Role of the EBC

The main role of the EBC is to provide governance and management support for the Canberra Multicultural Service radio station. The EBC Executive is responsible for running the service and has responsibility for scheduling programs, production co-ordination, recruitment and co-ordination of volunteers, technical co-ordination, fundraising/securing finance, liaising with funding bodies, promotion, sponsorship, training, maintenance of facilities and amenities.

4. Objectives

The objectives of the EBC are:

- A. To be the most recognised and preferred multicultural radio station in the act region
- B. To maintain highest program quality, relevance and innovation
- C. To maintain the highest level of technical excellence
- D. To be the most desired place to work as a broadcaster

5. Membership

Only members of the EBC and other groups with special permission of the EBC may have access to broadcasting time and other facilities.

EBC membership may be granted to any ethnic community seeking air time to broadcast an ethnic radio program and intending to comply with the rules of the constitution. This also applies to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

An "ethnic community" is a community of persons who speak the same language (in addition to English) and/or who belong to the same origin, whether or not they also come from within the same national boundaries. Arrangements between groups within the same ethnic community for the purpose of sharing broadcasting time and other facilities, are matters internal to that community.

Membership of the EBC is available to a group of persons (whether belonging to the same community or not), who undertake to comply with the rules of the constitution and who demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the EBC executive committee, their commitment and capacity to produce broadcasting programs of a multicultural nature either in English or a combination of English and some other community languages.

Associate membership of the EBC is also open to any individual with demonstrated interest in complying with the spirit and provisions of the rules of the Association.

Institutional membership is open to formal corporate and non-incorporated organisations (other than ethnic communities) who support the spirit and provisions of the EBC constitution.

A group whose application for membership has been rejected may apply within one month of notification, to lodge a written notice of their intention to appeal against the rejection. The next Executive meeting will give the appellant the opportunity to fully present his/her case and the Executive will likewise have the opportunity to present its case. The Executive will determine the appeal by a simple majority of votes and its decision is final.

A member may resign from the EBC by giving notice in writing to the Secretary. Such resignation will take effect at the time such notice is received by the Secretary unless a later date is specified in the notice.

6. Code of Behaviour of Members

EBC members agree to:

- Support and implement EBC's aims and policies, and work towards the highest standards of broadcasting
- Act honestly and in good faith
- Disclose potential conflicts of interest including financial, political or personal benefit
- Where they have a conflict of interests, remove themselves from particular discussions or decisions

- Respect the privacy and confidentiality of information obtained in the course of participation and not share confidential information with any group or individual outside the organisation
- Encourage respect for the diversity of cultures which make up the Australian society
- Deal with complaints fairly and properly without retribution

7. Membership and Broadcasting Fees

An annual membership fee is payable by the end of each financial year of which part goes to the National Ethnic Broadcasting Council. Variations to the fee can only be decided by a two-thirds majority of members present at an AGM.

In addition, a broadcasting fee can be charged for broadcasters which is on top of the ethnic radio grants.

Station sponsorship payments can also be made, however, private group program sponsorship is the responsibility of individual groups and must be according to CBF regulations.

(Fee Structure - Attachment A)

8. Voting

Any ethnic community having a radio program shall formally and in writing accredit two (2) delegates with full voting rights to the EBC. One of these delegates must be a current broadcaster of that community's program.

Any other group regularly producing a multicultural program is entitled to accredit one voting member to the EBC. Associate members have no voting rights and institutional members may be represented by one delegate with full voting rights. These voting rights apply equally to general meetings, special general meetings, annual and general meetings.

The Secretary will provide an updated list of eligible voting members at each AGM and will ensure that only eligible members' votes are recognised.

The Secretary will also remind members of voting eligibility requirements one month before the AGM.

Groups must be financial members to vote on decisions and appointments. Groups who are not financial members at the time of an AGM will not be eligible to vote at the AGM nor stand for nomination to the Executive.

9. Financial Arrangements

The Treasurer must account for all CBF funds paid and received, and allow any member to view the EBC records and balance sheets on request.

The Treasurer will send invoices for outstanding debts to groups at least one month prior to the AGM to ensure groups have the opportunity to pay due amounts before the AGM.

- The cheque book account will have authorising signatures of two nominees of the Executive.
- All money received and paid by the EBC will be recorded and a financial statement will be passed by the Treasurer to the Executive each month.

- Groups will be provided with invoices on a quarterly basis showing amounts due
- Groups who fail to pay within two quarters will be asked to provide reasons for the lateness of payment
- A groups may apply to the Executive to have their full or part debt waived if the group feels reasonable grounds exist
- The Executive may decide to remove, defer, seek part or full of the debt as decided by a simple majority

10. Membership Application Process

New membership applications should be processed as follows:

- all new membership applications should be forwarded to the Secretary or a nominee of the Executive for processing together with the appropriate membership fee
- the Secretary will present new applications to the next Executive meeting for approval
- the Secretary will then inform the applicant in writing of the approval/non-approval of the application and pass payment to the Treasure if approved or return payment to the applicant if not approved
- the Secretary will then draw up the contract for an approved membership and present it to the President for signature and to one other Executive member for witnessing
- contracts can only be signed after formal approval by the Executive
- the Executive will also view and approve the requested time slot or indicate to the applicant other availability if the requested time slot is not available
- the Secretary will place any other requests in a 'time slot' waiting list to be reviewed on a regular basis by the Executive
- any subsequent time slot variations will need to be approved by the Executive
- the Secretary will inform the Executive of new members' training requirements and the Executive will arrange appropriate training
- the Secretary will keep in a file all relevant membership documentation

(EBC Membership Application Form - Attachment B)

(Membership Approval Form - Attachment C)

11. Contracts

Broadcasting contracts must be signed by the group and program coordinator and provided to the Secretary before commencement of programming.

The coordinator must complete a membership form and notify the Executive of any subsequent changes within a month of the changes.

Groups must undertake to deal promptly with funding forms.

If groups fails to meet CBF broadcasting guidelines, then any money due will become the responsibility of the group.

(Contract Form - Attachment D)

12. Meeting Procedures

Members are encouraged to attend EBC quarterly general meeting. All meetings including general meetings, annual general meetings and special general meetings should adhere to the following meeting protocols:

- the agenda for a meeting should be sent to members at least seven days in advance of the meeting with an option for members to add agenda items

- the notice and agenda of an annual general meeting should be sent to members 21 days prior to the annual general meeting.
- a typical agenda may cover
 - apologies
 - approval of minutes of the last meeting
 - matters arising
 - correspondence
 - reports - President, Secretary, Treasurer, Sub-Committees
 - business items listed
 - other business
 - summary of actions
 - date of next meeting
- a quorum, if required, should be met before a meeting can proceed
- groundrules should be agreed prior to the meeting
- examples of ground rules may include:
 - all contributions be made through the chairperson
 - people be permitted to contribute without interruption
 - the meeting keep to the agenda unless agreed otherwise
 - comments be kept to the business at hand
 - the decision making process should include:
 - a proposer and a seconder for a motion
 - a discussion for and against the motion
 - agreement through a simple majority vote of members present
 - every effort should be made to reach agreement by consensus
 - disagreements should be resolved by a simple majority vote after a suitable discussion
 - each agenda item should conclude with a plan of action if relevant
 - sensitivity to the different backgrounds and cultures of members should ensure that no member feels intimidated
 - any deviation away from the agreed groundrules should be referred back to the chairperson or facilitator for rectification
- a person should be appointed to take minutes of the meeting and these minutes should be made available to all EBC members promptly
- the minutes should reflect decisions and actions decided at the meeting
- copies of the minutes of general and annual general meetings should be made available to all EBC members promptly

(Meeting Agenda Form - Attachment E)

13. Conflict and Dispute Resolution

Every reasonable effort will be made to resolve disputes that arise within the EBC conscientiously and as soon as practicable.

- Disputes within the EBC should be notified to the President who will invite the disputants to discuss their differences openly between themselves.
- If the dispute remains unresolved, the issue will be discussed by the Executive and a solution proposed.
- If the dispute still remains unresolved, the Executive will appoint a person agreed to by both parties, to mediate and arbitrate. In this case, the disputants should agree prior to the mediation to abide by the decision of the appointed arbitrator.

14. Complaints Handling

The EBC will make every effort to address complaints by members of the public or by members of the EBC conscientiously and as soon as practicable.

- Complaints should be forwarded in writing directly to the President who will acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within seven working days.
- The President will appoint an Executive member/s to investigate the complaint
- A response to the complainant will be made as soon as possible and within six weeks from the date of receipt of the complaint if possible.
- If the complainant indicates dissatisfaction with the response, the complainant will be advise of their right to refer the matter to the Australian Broadcasting Authority.
- Responses to complaints will be in writing and will include a copy of the Code of Practice on handling complaints
- Permanent records of all complaints and actions taken will be maintained by the Secretary
- EBC will provide records of complaints to the ABA as required.
- EBC will undertake to pass on all comments from the public, made in good faith, both complimentary and critical, to the individuals responsible for preparing and presenting the program(s) concerned.

15. Employment of Staff

The following procedures should be considered in the employment of staff by the EBC:

- 15.1 The Executive will agree on the need to advertise a position.
- 15.2 An interview panel and panel chairperson will be selected by the Executive and should include at least one member of the Executive.
- 15.3 The duty statement and selection criteria will be checked against the position by the interview panel.
- 15.4 The position will be advertised in relevant local and national newspapers as appropriate. Applicants will be given at least 2 weeks to submit written applications.
- 15.5 Interested persons will be given selection criteria and duty statements by request.
- 15.6 The Secretary will keep a list of names of people who have requested selection criteria and duty statements.
- 15.7 On the closing date for receipt of applications, the panel chairperson, in consultation with the panel, will decide whether to advertise a second time, depending on the number and quality of applications received (if re-advertised, steps 4, 5 and 6 are repeated)
- 15.8 The panel chairperson will provide copies of applications to the interview panel members. Applicants will be short listed by the panel according to the extent to which they meet the selection criteria.
- 15.9 Short-listed applicants will be telephoned by the panel chairperson to set up interview times.
- 15.10 The interview panel will create a list of questions for the interviewees, with at least one question addressing each selection criterion.
- 15.11 Applicants will be interviewed. After each interview, interviewers will be encouraged to make notes on a standard ranking sheet, and each applicant will be discussed both immediately following his or her interview, and on completion of all interviews.
- 15.12 Applicants will be ranked according to their scores, and then further discussed by the panel. The top two or three applicants will be identified.
- 15.13 Members of the interview panel will call referees of the top two or three applicants, and refer comments back to the panel chairperson. Panel

- members will discuss the interviews, written applications and referee reports and make a recommendation on the best applicant on merit.
- 15.14 All panel members will sign the report if unanimous in their decision. If one member dissents from the majority decision, that member will submit his or her own report.
- 15.15 A report summarising the claims of the recommended best applicant will be submitted by the panel chairperson to the Executive. The Executive will approve the recommendation if it is satisfied that the selection process has been fair and unbiased.
- 15.16 In the case of an urgent appointment, the President can approve the recommendation only if the Executive gives prior authority to the President to do so.
- 15.17 The Secretary will send a letter of appointment to the successful applicant.
- 15.18 If the top applicant rejects the offer, the applicant ranked second will be offered the position, unless otherwise indicated by the report.
- 15.19 The Secretary will send letters of rejection to all unsuccessful applicants, and they will be invited by the panel chairperson to discuss their own interview.
- 15.20 Prior to commencement, an employment contract will be prepared by the Secretary and signed by the successful applicant.
- 15.21 Staff will be employed initially for a three month probationary period. Prior to the completion of the probation, there will be a review of the employee by a probationary review panel appointed by the Executive. The probationary review panel will assess the performance of the staff member against the selection criteria and job description for the relevant position and the staff member will be given the opportunity to respond to any concerns raised. On the basis of the review panel's assessment, the Executive will decide if the staff member is to be made permanent, the review period extended or the staff member's engagement terminated.

16. Dismissal of Staff

Any action to terminate the employment of a staff member must be carried out in accordance with relevant legislation.

Staff may be dismissed for breach of contract, criminal actions, inadequate performance or lack of funding.

The Executive will review the performance and provide feedback to a staff member annually. Any grounds for dismissal will be advised to the staff member concerned and the staff member will be given the opportunity to present his/her case to the Executive. After consideration of information presented, the Executive may agree to dismiss a staff member with a simple majority.

17. Volunteers Rights and Responsibilities

EBC believes volunteers have the right to:

- Get recognition for their contributions to the organisation
- Participate in management, planning and decision making processes as relevant
- Receive support, guidance, direction and feedback
- Be provided with the opportunity for orientation, training and development
- Be covered by public liability insurance

Volunteers have a responsibility to:

- Support the EBC to achieve its goals, and to work towards the best standards of broadcasting and service
- Abide by the EBC's policies and procedures

- Agree in writing to maintain client confidentiality and privacy at all times, unless required by law
- Respect for the diversity of cultures that constitute Australian society

18. Equal Employment Opportunity

The EBC is committed to Equal Employment Opportunity or fair employment practices and is committed to:

- Recruitment and promotion on the basis of merit
- Equitable access to training and development activities
- A working environment free of discrimination and harassment
- Ensuring all staff are made aware of EEO policy by making it available to them and by providing training where possible if required
- EEO issues may be raised at any time with either the President or the members of Executive
- If necessary, unresolved complaints will be addressed within the grievance processes

19. Occupational Health and Safety Statement

The EBC recognises that members and staff have the right to work in a safe and healthy environment and that their safety and health is not impaired as a result of working at the EBC. Clients, volunteers and visitors also have the right to protection from hazards to their health whilst at the EBC.

The EBC will take reasonable steps to ensure a safe workplace by:

- Promoting awareness of Occupational Health & Safety
- Conducting ongoing checks of safety of premises and equipment
- Encouraging staff and members to undertake First Aid training
- Encouraging staff and members to identify and eliminate potential workplace hazards
- Recording OH&S incidences
- Ensuring insurance is adequate to cover OH&S

20. Accessibility of the Service to Potential Users

The EBC maintains access principles to its users in the following manner:

- Resource material is available in community languages
- Staff are all trained in the use of the Telephone Interpreting Service, and are encouraged to use it if there is a communication difficulty
- The Centre is accessible by public transport
- A lift is available for people with physical disabilities so that they can access the offices
- Programs are advertised widely, and where possible in written and spoken community languages

21. Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

All staff, volunteers and members must read this policy and sign a confidentiality agreement:

- Personal information will not be collected or recorded without the knowledge and permission of the individual concerned

- Personal information will not be collected by the EBC unless this information is necessary to carry out the work of the EBC
- If personal information is collected by the EBC, the individual will be informed about the purpose of the collection of the information
- Personal information will not be passed to another agency or person outside the EBC, without the individual's consent, unless required by law
- Personal information will not be passed on to another worker within the EBC unless this information is necessary to carry out the work of the EBC
- An individual has the right to see any information collected and recorded about that individual
- Personal information will be stored in areas where only authorised staff have access

22. Training and Development

New members will be provided with an orientation package and program which includes meeting the Executive, CMS operation guidelines, EBC policy and procedures guidelines, the EBC business plan and other relevant documentation as required.

Training and development will be provided to new and existing members to ensure the EBC maintains the highest standard of broadcasting.

All broadcasters will receive or be adequately knowledgeable in the following before commencement of a program:

- Stop gap training
- Code of Practice
- Emergency procedures
- Station etiquette
- Program preparation

Broadcasters will be provided with a training and development checklist which will indicate the training and development required to meet the required broadcasting standard.

Each year a training strategy will be developed to ensure program standards are maintained and to enhance programs and the operations of the station. By preparing a training strategy, training priorities can be determined by the Executive with an appreciation of overall funding requirements.

23. Attachments

- A. Fee Structure
- B. Membership Application Form
- C. Membership Approval Form
- D. Contract Form
- E. Meeting Agenda Form