

# Monster Music Implores Readers: “Please Sign the Commit to Community Radio Petition”

Providers of piano, guitar, drum, and singing lessons in Australia reveal how the petition could help save as many as 37 community radio stations across Australia.

Perth, WA, June 12, 2013 - Last March, representatives of community radio stations all across Australia banded together to drum up support for a campaign to save digital community radio. The campaign, called Commit to Community Radio, is raising awareness of a \$1.4 million shortfall in government funding to help community radio stations switch from analogue to digital. An estimated 37 community radio stations across Australia are considered to be at risk of being unable to switch over to digital broadcasting. Advocates of community radio cite the fact that approximately one in four Australians listens to community radio on a weekly basis, and are disappointed in last year's budget cuts that resulted in a \$1.4 million shortfall for community radio. If funding is not restored in the next budget, which is determined this May, many digital stations could go under. Stations considered to be in danger of closure include 3RRR in Melbourne, which garners 329,000 listeners every week to go with 14,000 subscribers, and Light Melbourne, which broadcasts to 364,000 listeners for FM, and another 158,000 for its digital channel each month. Noongar Radio in Perth, RPH in Adelaide, 4EB Global in Brisbane, and FBi in Sydney are also considered to be at risk. The Commit to Community Radio campaign has started an online petition, which currently claims 39,600 signees, as of this writing. Adrian Basso, President of the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia, is grudgingly optimistic. He cites a positive and enthusiastic response to the petition and several meetings with key government figures as reasons for optimism. Basso also cites the National Cultural Policy, and it's infusion of over \$200 million into the arts as both encouraging and a possible indication the government may fully understand the importance of community radio to Australians. Danny Achurch, musician, teacher, and founder of Monster Music, hopes that every musician, student, teacher, and those who read his blog sign the petition and make their voices heard. Achurch has studied the numbers concerning this issue, and it is very surprising that the situation has become as dire as it is now. According to Achurch, “The money is there. The government is already giving \$134 million to free-to-air TV stations in license rebates to help them convert to digital broadcasting. Meanwhile, community radio is only asking for \$1.4 million. Since 25% of Australians listen to community radio on a weekly basis, the situation is even more ludicrous than it would appear, without context.” Achurch continued, “In addition, over \$200 million is pledged to the new Creative Australia effort, and the Australian Music Radio Airplay Project (AMRAP) received \$250,000 from the budget last year in a last-minute decision similar to this one. It cannot be denied that community radio is extremely important to the health of the Australian music scene. Most Australian artists get their first airplay on Australian community radio stations. Without this medium for exposure, much of the great work that is being done by Creative Australia will have been done in vain.” Achurch concluded, “If you care about Australian music and community radio, please take the time to visit the Commit to Community Radio website and sign the petition.” Monster Music provides drum, singing, guitar, and keyboard lessons in Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, and most Australian cities, as well as lessons on most popular instruments. To find out more about Monster Music, please visit their website: <http://www.monstermusic.com.au/> or call 08 9335 8881.

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