



Speech by

**Mr G. HEALY**

**MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA NORTH**

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Hansard 6 August 1998

**ABC RADIO RACING SERVICE**

**Mr HEALY** (Toowoomba North—NPA) (7.03 p.m.): I believe this matter has not been discussed before and I think it is probably pertinent to raise it at this stage. I refer to the ramifications of the decision by the ABC in relation to the discontinuance of its radio racing coverage on its regional radio network effective from 1 July 1998. I want to raise some points in relation to the effect that decision is having on some regional areas of Queensland.

There are some gaps in regional areas where some radio listeners will miss out if further services are not provided. For example, since that decision was made on 1 July, many rural listeners are unable to access the services currently provided by 4TAB. I am aware that 4TAB will provide race coverage to 88% of the State's population by the end of the year, broadcasting about 620 races per week. It is still narrow cast and it is still discriminating against those who cannot get to a TAB agency or have access to 4TAB.

It is also very difficult for people in rural and regional areas who do not have a race coverage from 4TAB or from the ABC to listen to their race broadcasts on a Saturday, particularly if they are fixing the fence or painting the shed. I understand Federal Communications Minister, Senator Richard Alston, has been in touch with the Australian Broadcasting Authority and he advises that there has been discussion with State and Territory TABs in relation to what can be done in those areas. I ask the Minister for Racing to advise the House as soon as possible what steps are planned or have been taken by the Queensland TAB to address this issue.

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