

FRASER COAST COMMUNITY RADIO INC.

POL05 a: PROGRAMMING PROCEDURES

Background

In developing a legitimate program for Fraser Coast Community Radio, both individual and weekly, certain principles must be followed. *Most* are mandated by the ACMA, which means our broadcasting licence is dependent on our programs adhering to them. Others are policies of our Station following ACMA guidelines.

Presenters are encouraged to offer programs they relate to and enjoy within the guidelines below. As we are a voluntary organisation, **volunteers' available time and other commitments are the main priority for timetabling**. The time slot offered to presenters will of necessity reflect all of the conditions (1-10) as our licence is dependent on this.

Purpose

To inform and guide both the Programming Committee and individual presenters as to the requirements for developing programs and to provide a transparent process for presenters to follow when developing a program proposal.

Policy

1. **Programs should reflect our local community's interests and needs.** Guidance for this comes from the Programming Committee in response to data collected from local listeners, non listeners, interested parties (eg sponsors, Associate and Ordinary Members) and from the demographics of the area. The demographics will indicate which age groups are likely to listen, what type of audience we may have, e.g. ethnic groups, indigenous groups, employed, unemployed, ages, temporary/permanent population, urban/country, socio-economic standing, and education levels.
2. Community radios with a GENERAL licence, such as ours, are required to play **25% Australian music** (performed in Australia, performed by an Australian, composed by an Australian) every month. As we do grant some latitude with our ethnic programs, all other programs are required by Station policy to aim at playing **25% Australian music every month**. This is to be recorded by every presenter for auditing purposes.
3. **We should include local content throughout our programming as much as possible.**
4. **Our material must not be likely "to stereotype, incite, vilify, or perpetrate hatred against or attempt to demean any person or group"** (Community Radio Broadcasting Codes of Practice, 2025). In our behaviour and activities community radio stations must be non-biased towards diverse groups, opposing and breaking down prejudice. We must be aware of the diversity within our community in regard to indigenous population, ethnicity, language, physical or mental ability, occupation, isolation, age, religious, cultural or political beliefs.

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Programming must reflect this diversity.

5. Our programming is to offer **an alternative to other accessible media outlets** in the local community, especially in regard to presenting a range of material not otherwise usually presented by other outlets. Our Station has taken the stance that our core listening times will offer this while programs similar to other stations can be presented later in the evenings along with other more specialized programs.
6. **Sponsors may not influence individual program content or programming in general.** We will only broadcast sponsorship announcements rather than advertising, totaling no more than 5 minutes in any hour of broadcasting.
7. “Our community radio station **will not broadcast material that may;**
 - a. Incite, encourage, or present for its own sake violence or brutality,
 - b. Mislead or alarm listeners by simulating news and events,
 - c. Present as desirable the use of illegal drugs, the misuse of tobacco or alcohol, as well as other harmful substances, and
 - d. Glamorise, sensationalise, or present suicide as a solution to life problems, in particular, broadcast material should not provide explicit details about the methods and/or location of a suicide attempt or death. (Community Radio Broadcasting Codes of Practice, 2025)
8. There will be **no talk back sessions on local issues or issues more wide ranging.** We are not permitted (Community Radio Codes of Practice, 5.1, 2025), under terms of catering for “diversity”, to broadcast commentary or analyses unless it is in a news or current events program, or “in the legitimate context of a humorous, satirical or dramatic work” (Community Radio Codes of Practice 4.1, 2025). This type of program is currently not a part of our programming at FM107.5, therefore no presenter is permitted to undertake commentary on such issues.
9. **Indigenous programming.** (Community Broadcasting Codes of Practice, 2025)
“4.1 We will seek to involve and take advice from Indigenous Australians in the production of programs focusing on Indigenous Australians and issues. Where possible, we will consult the appropriate Indigenous media organization broadcaster on appropriate forms of communication.

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Code 7.4 We will prioritise First Nations voices when reporting on or discussing First Nations issues. When reporting on Indigenous people and issues, we will take care to verify and observe the best way to respect culture and customs....” e.g. be mindful of local groups, use appropriate words and phrases, seek proper advice on how best to go about programming.

FCCR presenters must go through the Management Committee if wishing to include Indigenous matters in their programs.

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10. **Core listening times for our Station are between 6.00am and 6.00pm on weekdays and 6.00am to 12.00 noon on weekends.** Music in core listening times will be in an “easy listening” format, avoiding specialist programs that do not reflect the listeners’ needs. Demographics and community feedback indicate that information should be concentrated in the early hours of the day, especially weekdays. The 2.00 – 4.00pm sessions on weekdays are also a popular listening time and therefore could include information in programs.
11. **Flexibility of session times.** To accommodate more presenters and more sessions (if the need arises), there will be scope for some flexibility with the 2 and 3 hour time slots, especially in non core times.
12. **Only trained or experienced presenters may do interviews.** The Station holds a list of these presenters. Others may take advantage of training opportunities when they are offered.
13. We have **options of individual presenter programs, co-hosting presenter programs, co-presenter programs, and programs where non presenter personnel may take some part in the program.**

Presenters may submit proposals using any of these options, but all must be clearly detailed in the written proposal or the presenter/co-presenters may like to discuss their proposal with the Programming Committee. Evaluation of program proposals will take into consideration the most suitable time of the day, the training the non-presenter has received and the capacity of the non-presenter to value add to the program. Thought will also be given to the variety we have within our weekly schedule.

14. While **music** has been central to our programs, we are **not restricted to this**. We can offer programs that are aimed at mainly talk, reading (e.g. stories, poems), thematic content for special times of the year or celebration days and interviews. Community feedback will be a guide for types of programs.

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Our weekly schedule should offer **variety** in the programs presented while maintaining and acceptable “flow”.

15. Because of the voluntary nature of our organization, presenters must be willing to backfill other presenters’ programs, **reflecting, to the best of their ability, that program’s theme and intent**. This is especially pertinent for backfilling of the core programs. The specialist programs may be more difficult for relief presenters to keep to the usual content. This can be negotiated with the Program Manager at the time.

It is not acceptable for presenters to simply present their own program and take no further part in the work of the Station. If relieving is too difficult, with time constraints, a presenter is to support the Station in other ways stated in their volunteers’ agreement.

Presenters may leave music for the person backfilling a program, however that person is not obligated to use the music supplied if they are competent in following the program format.

Presenters who will be absent must advise the Programming Manager of date of absence and the Programming Manager will authorize back fill. Preference will be given to presenters who do not hold a program time slot to give them airtime, given that they are capable of presenting a program within the same genre/s and era/s as in the original program proposal.

16. Process for proposal submission and approvals

- a. Program proposals will be called for every 12 months aiming to commence on the first of June (or start dates as determined by the Programming Committee).
- b. All presenters must submit a proposal for new and ongoing programs. The process and conditions for this will be clearly outlined by the Programming Committee in good time for submissions to be completed by the deadline.
- c. It will be a requirement to rewrite a continuing program proposal giving a brief outline of the program the presenter undertakes. However, if there is significant change to a current program, a complete form outlining the changes must be submitted.
- d. If a program is to have permanent status for the 12 month cycle, it must have an approved proposal. Non approved programs will be designated to time slots that have otherwise not been requested and will have a temporary status, although they may stay in place for the entire 12 months if there is no need to use that time slot.
- e. Prior to each 12 month period, all proposals will be evaluated or reevaluated by the Programming Committee regarding the suitability of content and style. This includes

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- ongoing programs. Feedback will be offered to presenters and changes or amendments may be required prior to approvals being given.
- f. Time slots will either be confirmed or renegotiated. Changes will be negotiated in situations such as:
 - New programs needing to be accommodated;
 - A program is deemed to be more appropriate in another time slot, or
 - To accommodate changed availabilities of presenters (other situations may also arise that would suggest a need to negotiate time slots). All such changes will be kept to a minimum, will have clear reasons for considering alternative times, will be negotiated with presenters, and, as much as possible, a suitable alternative determined.
 - g. Members of the Programming Committee will be available for anyone wanting assistance in developing their proposal.
 - h. Once approved, programs may not be altered within the 12 month time frame. In exceptional circumstances approval for change may be requested through the Programming Manager or to the Programming Committee.
 - i. All programs will be reviewed throughout the 12 month cycle. They will be reviewed against the proposal in order to establish how closely the implementation has adhered to the content and purpose in the proposal. Skills may also be evaluated both by presenters themselves or by others. This will be done as an objective exercise.
 - j. Proposals will be sought by the Programming Committee, both internally and in the wider community. This will be promoted on the Station website, on air, my email to members, signs in the studio, in the local newspapers. Approaches may be made to particular organizations such as the newspapers or universities. As such, we meet our legal requirements for encouraging community access and participation.
 - k. All sponsorships to be pre-recorded prior to broadcasting.
 - l. Programs must comply with Station and Community standards and requirements and be unique to Fraser Coast FM.
 - m. During the 12 month cycle, the need may arise to place new presenters in the schedule or to place a new initiative.
17. New presenters will not complete a program proposal until the end of the 12 month cycle. Their programs will be temporary until then. After 3 months a review will be undertaken and feedback offered by the Programming Committee. An experienced presenter will be assigned to mentor them during this time which will be considered probationary.

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To facilitate their skill practice, temporary programming will be implemented as soon as possible after training is completed. This will be expedited in the following order:

- a. Vacant time slots (with no approved or non approved programs) – usually at night or early morning.
- b. Fill-ins, long term if possible, at a time appropriate to the expertise of the presenter and attempting to match with the absent presenter's program.
- c. Temporary programs i.e. those with no approved proposal.
- d. In exceptional cases, where all the above cannot facilitate a new presenter, a presenter who holds 2 programs may be approached to negotiate a change. The 2nd choice of a presenter would be considered. There may also be the opportunity to remain on in the training time slot.

New presenters may also choose to negotiate with a presenter and the Chair-Programming Committee to co-present or present in tandem. If co-presenting, the guidelines need to be followed and an experienced presenter should be chosen, acting as a mentor.

These opportunities for new presenters would be in place until the end of the 12 month cycle, they will have a choice regarding submitting a proposal or remaining taking a temporary time slot.

If a new presenter completes training immediately prior to a new 12 month cycle, they will have a choice regarding submitting a proposal or remaining taking a temporary time slot.

18. In the event of a new initiative, placement would be dependent on the nature of the initiative. Placement would be done through negotiation and may be something that a presenter might like to incorporate in their current program.

19. New initiatives may come as a response to invitations directed to the wider community.

20. All programming matters are to be referred directly to the Chair-Programming Committee

21. References:

- a. CBAA Codes of Practice (2025)
- b. POL05 Programming Policy March 2026