



Policy
Last updated

Programming
1 October 2023

SUNSHINE FM PROGRAMMING POLICY

Sunshine FM was established in 2002 as a community radio station and has a long-established 'more music' format. We are licenced to serve a mature age audience of 45+ with a program offering that is not available on other radio stations in Sunshine FM's licence area. Our licence obligations require us to comply with those programming objectives.

Sunshine FM strives, every day, to excel at what we do. We are a high quality free-to-air broadcaster that provides music-based programming, and we participate in and support the community we serve.

Sunshine FM's programming policy complies with Code 2 'Principles of diversity and independence' described in the CBAA Codes of practice.

PROGRAMMING OBJECTIVE

Our objective is to provide content that meets the needs of existing listeners and attracts new listeners to Sunshine FM. We need to satisfy the expectations and aspirations of our audience by creating unique, local content that is relevant to the Sunshine Coast community.

This objective should be considered in the context of the Sunshine FM licence area being in the heart of a large regional media market which is served by multiple radio broadcasters – community, commercial and national – that set high benchmarks for quality and professionalism. We believe our listeners reasonably expect Sunshine FM to also provide radio content that is of a consistently high standard.

There's an important and tremendously rewarding community service aspect to this, too. The more successful we are in delivering on our programming objective, the more we can contribute to the hundreds of not-for-profit organisations and Sunshine Coast locals we support, every year.

More listeners mean more people hearing and responding to Sunshine FM community service announcements and on-air interviews. Greater community awareness generates more support for organisations and individuals who need the community's help. It's another great reason why we're the Sunshine Coast's radio station.

PROGRAMMING POLICY

The station manager has overall responsibility for Sunshine FM programming and is supported by a program sub-committee.

The sub-committee has input to station programming by providing to the manager and Board of Management, its opinion on the merit and suitability of potential new programs and segments. The sub-committee also provides feedback to the manager and Board of Management about existing programming content.

Specifically, the program sub-committee:

- Is responsible for assessing program proposals submitted by the community,
- Is responsible for making recommendations in writing to the Sunshine FM Board of Management in relation to the allocation of air-time and changes to the existing program schedule,

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- Will be comprised of the Chair of the Board of Management and four (4) other members who will be elected by a vote of Association members at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting or in the case of casual vacancies, appointed by a majority vote of existing sub-committee members,
- Members will not include members of the Board of Management, other than the Chair of the Board of Management,
- Members will elect a subcommittee Chair who can be any member of the sub-committee, other than the Chair of the Board of Management,
- Other members will not include people who hold managerial or administrative positions within the station, such as the station manager, however the sub-committee should invite the manager to attend its meetings, so the sub-committee can be briefed and updated on matters relevant to its role.

In performing its role, the program sub-committee will seek to reach an informed, balanced view of what is in the best interests of Sunshine FM's listeners and the Sunshine Coast community.

In providing advice on programming policy and content the program sub-committee and station manager will always have regard to the station's licence obligations, requirements of and directions issued by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (the ACMA), and Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBAA) Codes of Practice.

Sunshine FM programming policies focus on:

1. Creating high quality, locally-produced and presented programs that are primarily music-based and appealing to mature-aged listeners aged 45+
2. Broadcasting content not generally available on other radio stations in Sunshine FM's licence area.
3. Providing meaningful service to community groups and not-for-profit organisations by broadcasting relevant community information and ensuring air-time is fairly shared across participating community organisations, commensurate with their size and stature within the community.
4. Considering listener and community feedback about current and potential new program content to ensure station programming best meets the expectations of Sunshine FM's audience.
5. Supporting local musicians where appropriate and relevant to Sunshine FM's programming objectives, and
6. Ensuring that, other than within standard sponsorship arrangements, Sunshine FM does not accept payment of any kind in return for airplay or promotion of music.

MUSIC

1. Sunshine FM aims to broadcast music that satisfies the expectations of its mature-age audience. Generally, this will be achieved by programming music that reflects the values and life experience of people aged 45+ and will typically include hit music from the 1950s to today that sits comfortably within Sunshine FM's overall format. Specialised programs featuring music outside the station's typical programming parameters can also be broadcast, providing it does not disenfranchise Sunshine FM's primary audience.

2. Music selection will be informed by referring to recognised music and radio industry data and publications, with an emphasis on music that has ranked within the Top 100 in Australia and major overseas markets.
3. To maintain consistency with the station's programming policies and compatibility with audience expectations:
 - a. music selected for broadcast will be chosen from the Sunshine FM music library,
 - b. music will only be added to the library with the approval of the station manager,
 - c. music not present in the station library, including 'novelty' songs, will only be broadcast with the approval of the station manager,
 - d. the station manager will assess and determine the outcome of any disputes over music selection or deviation from Sunshine FM's programming policies.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The program sub-committee will meet, quarterly. Proper minutes will be kept as a record of each meeting and be provided to the Board of Management within five (5) working days of each meeting. The station manager may attend all meetings of the sub-committee but will not direct the sub-committee or participate in voting.

1. Programming Parameters

The station manager and program sub-committee will be mindful that:

- a. All existing and proposed programs and segments need to comply with station and community standards, all relevant licensing, regulatory and code of conduct requirements, and be unique to Sunshine FM.
- b. Proposals for new programs or segments, or changes to existing programs should demonstrate how the proposed content will differ from existing content broadcast by Sunshine FM and other Sunshine Coast broadcasters, and how the proposed content will satisfy or better meet the expectations of Sunshine FM's audience.
- c. Sunshine FM's format is framed within a 24 x 7, 52 weeks-a-year schedule. Programs are generally formatted in blocks of 4+ hours and 2 hours for specialty programs.
- d. Proposals for new programs or segments should include the duration and frequency of the program or segment although allocation of time slots remains the responsibility of the station manager.
- e. Proposals for a new program or significant change to the format of an existing program need to include a fully formed explanation of the concept and realistic view of the likely level of audience engagement.
- f. New programs and segments may begin with shorter durations, and be extended at a later date, should they deliver satisfactory levels of listener engagement. Conversely, the station manager may decide to discontinue programs and segments that in his considered opinion, fail to satisfactorily engage Sunshine FM's audience or fail to consistently meet the station's minimum expectations of relevance or quality. Similarly, the program sub-committee may form a view that new program content is failing to meet its stated objectives or an acceptable standard of quality, and can recommend to the station manager that the program be discontinued.
- g. Proposals for new programs will generally have a development timeframe of at least one month.

- h. Other than in cases of illness or circumstances demonstrably beyond the individual's control, presenters of ongoing programs will need to commit to being available to host every program or segment for at least six (6) months (including holiday periods). With the agreement of the station manager, the minimum availability period may be shorter for fixed term programs or segments.
- i. Preference will be given to proposals that originate within Sunshine FM's licence area.
- j. Should a program or segment proposal be accepted by Sunshine FM, the concept and content will be and will remain the intellectual property of the Sunshine FM Radio Association Inc.
- k. The program sub-committee should advise proponents of the outcome of their submission in a timely manner.

2. Assessment and approval process

- a. Proposals must be in writing and submitted to the program sub-committee using the designated form which is available on the Sunshine FM website and from Sunshine FM Reception.
- b. The program sub-committee will review and evaluate proposed new programs and segments or changes to an existing program, and how they would fit within the station's programming policies.
- c. The program sub-committee may meet with the proposer to discuss the proposal and canvas amendments or additional information that may be required before the sub-committee can make a decision on the proposal.
- d. The sub-committee will assess any potential impact of the proposal on existing programming and consider any consequential programming changes that may be required.
- e. Proposed presenters and support personnel such as producers should be prepared to become members of the Sunshine FM Radio Association Inc.
- f. In addition to requirements described in Programming Parameters 1.B, proposals must address the scope and availability of resources needed to produce and deliver the program, as well as any known or anticipated costs that might be incurred in delivering the program.
- g. An audio demo reel or sample of the program should accompany each proposal and be provided to the station manager for review.
- h. Preference will be given to proposals that originate within Sunshine FM's licence area.
- i. If the program sub-committee is satisfied that the proposal has merit and complies with all station policies, the sub-committee will, within five (5) working days of arriving at its decision, forward the proposal, any accompanying media content and the sub-committee's recommendations to the station manager for the manager's review and assessment.
- j. The station manager will advise the program sub-committee of his or her decision within five (5) working days of receiving the proposal. The station manager may wish to meet with the sub-committee to discuss the proposal, prior to arriving at a decision. The sub-committee may be represented by the Chair, acting on behalf of the entire sub-committee.
- k. The program sub-committee will notify the Proposer of Sunshine FM's decision, in writing and within 48 hours of the decision being finalised. If the station decides to not proceed with the proposal, the sub-committee will

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provide the Proposer a considered explanation of why the proposal was declined. If the station decides to proceed with the proposal, the sub-committee will advise the Proposer that the proposal has been successful and that thereafter, the station manager will correspond with the Proposer.

- I. In the event that the program sub-committee and station manager cannot reach agreement, the matter will be reviewed by the Board of Management at its next meeting and the Board's decision will be final.

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