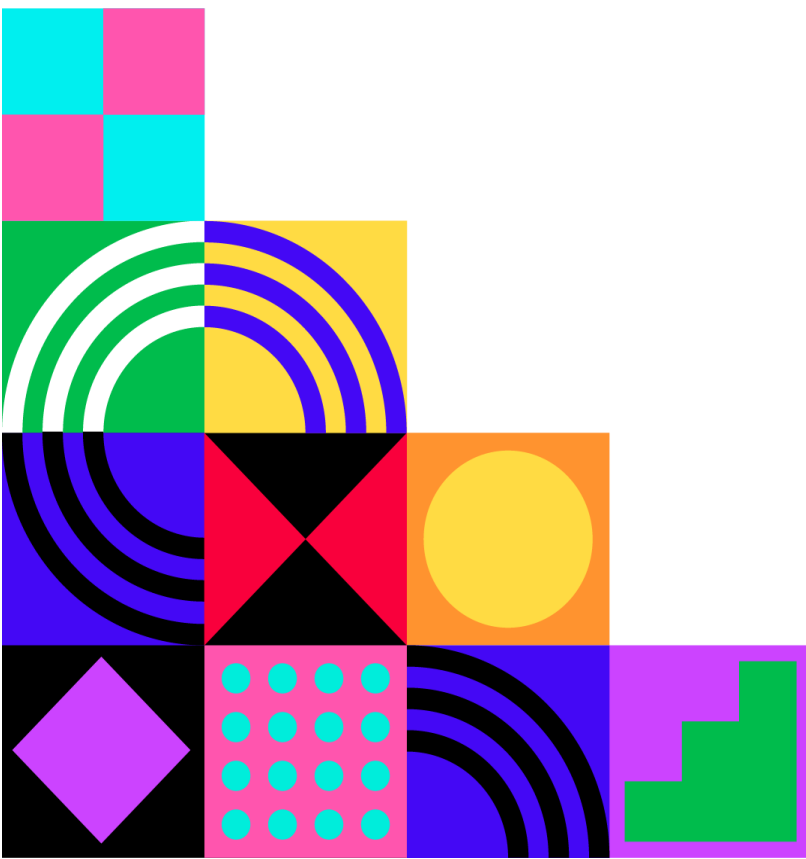


CBA

Community Radio Network Technical Delivery Specifications

September 2025



Delivery Specifications for Community Radio Network (CRN) Program Makers and Applicants

About CRN

The CRN is the [CBAA](#)'s program distribution service. It's a way of providing stations with a 24/7 audio feed; access to key programs such as the National Radio News, talks and specialist music programming and live broadcasts; and sharing the best of community radio across the country.

When submitting content for CRN to consider, or for regular programming, we have a specific set of recording, production and presentation standards we need to adhere to, so we have created these guidelines to help you put forward the best quality programming.

Recording, Production and Delivery Guidelines

Audio quality

- All audio should be free of extraneous hiss, hum, buzz and other noise.

Levels and dynamics

- Levels should never 'clip' or distort; leave plenty of headroom during all stages of recording, editing and mixing.
- Average levels should be smooth and consistent across audio content - i.e. spoken word and music, telephone or location interviews.
- Do not use hard limiting or mastering effects before delivery – this processing is applied during CRN distribution and again during station retransmission.

Data compression and encoding

- Record and mix session audio in linear PCM (WAV) format: 16-bit, 48000 sample rate or higher.
- For music within programs do your best to use CD-quality source material, not MP3 or online streams.
- Avoid any other "lossy" compression stages as audio may be subject to multiple re-encoding cycles through transmission to stations and audiences.

Mono/Stereo compatibility

- All voices should be panned centre for mono compatibility.
- Avoid heavy panning effects and sound design to avoid phase issues.

File Delivery Specification

File Delivery Specification		
Sample rate	48,000 khz	
Bitrate	16 bits per sample	
Channels	2 (stereo)	
Formats	WAV (preferred)	Linear PCM (no compression)
	MP3	320kbps stereo minimum Never use variable bitrate encoding MP3 will soon be phased out
Levels & Loudness		
Levels should conform to EBU R128 - https://tech.ebu.ch/docs/r/r128.pdf		
Integrated Loudness	-23 LUFS	
True Peak Level	-1 dbTP	
Note: Program audio level may be adjusted post-delivery to CRN to suit a variety of output formats. The above specifications give the most flexibility to adapt audio for multiple needs.		

Unsure if your program fits these specifications? Email crn@cbaa.org.au to talk about your digital audio workstation (DAW) and recording set-up.

Program duration and structure

- **Standard program durations** are 1'55'50, 55'50 or 27'50 minutes (check with CRN for your program).
- **Fade-out:** the final five seconds of your program will be faded down in live satellite payout. Ensure all spoken word is finished before the fade — consider ending your program with instrumental theme or music.
- **Consider producing an intro and outro for your program** with theme music, this is a great way for the audience to identify your program easily.
- **Reintroduce the program every 15 minutes** to remind people what they are listening to and bring new audience members along for the journey. Radio is dynamic and your audience changes at any moment.

Does your program sit outside the box?

We are always on the lookout for short content, special series, live broadcasts and other specialist and unique content we can provide to stations in our project called *Extras*. If you think your program is more suitable to *Extras*, get in touch with the CRN team directly.

Community Radio Network Presentation

Consider the national audience

Your home station will promote your show to local listeners regularly, but that's not necessarily the case for stations using CRN content. National listeners are likely to be coming in "cold" so please clearly and regularly provide the name of the program, and additional contextual information as required.

For the purposes of a demo program, try your best to emulate CRN presentation styles and pitching your content for the national audience, it's the easiest way for us to tell if your program would be suitable for national distribution.

A good rule of thumb is, whenever you say your station's name, also say "Community Radio Network". Ideally, you'll say one of those tags twice per program. Normally at the beginning and end of the show.

Examples for presentation:

- "...This program was produced in the studios of 2SER in Sydney, and is being heard across Australia on the Community Radio Network"
- "...heard on community radio right around Australia"
- "...on your local community station"

Things to avoid for National Program Presentation

Giving out time calls, unless you are presenting a program live across the network, in which case make sure to acknowledge all Australian time zones.

Making specific, current local references e.g. traffic, weather, local station or area activities (unless it's the purpose of the program).

- **Mentioning local events without providing context for national listeners.** For example: "...local listeners can see the Baked Beans Orchestra on the 23rd of August at The Hotpot Theatre – national listeners please check the group's website for tour listings..."
- **Using references such as "on the program tonight..."** as listeners could be hearing your show at any time. Instead, say "coming up..." or "in the next hour" or "on today's program". Mention this to any guests prior.
- **Saying "CRN"** – listeners won't know what you mean. Please use "Community Radio Network".

- **Saying your home station's frequency** (e.g. 101.4 FM) when mentioning its name during your program. Doing that leads to confusion for listeners at different stations and makes your program less attractive to CRN stations.
- **Playing sponsorship announcements** without first checking in with CRN.

Want to hear some best practice examples? Contact CRN staff.

Avoid city-centric radio

Make your program as inclusive and relevant as possible to a national audience by avoiding metro-centric references. This will also help increase your program's take-up. Use CRN as a soundboard for ideas on doing this effectively.

If you need to refer to a specific location (e.g. a suburb, or small country town) that not all listeners may be aware of, make sure you add a larger contextual area. For example, instead of saying **"This species is unique to the Sutherland Shire"**, you might say **"This species is unique to the Sutherland Shire, in southern Sydney"**.

Strong content and music with expletives

CRN will not censor or shy away from programming that shares difficult experiences or that contains expletives, however we ask program makers to be aware of the audience and time their program plays, and to adhere to the codes of practice.

Avoid strong or offensive language wherever possible. If it is unavoidable, please follow these steps:

- Alert CRN staff about the content so they can check its suitability for airplay.
- Put a disclaimer or warning at the start of the program AND/OR another warning just before the piece containing the potentially offensive content.

Example of a language warning: *"The following program (or song) contains strong language that may offend some listeners. You may like to tune out for the next (however long) to avoid it."*

Example of a strong content warning: *"The following program contains strong content that may offend some listeners. You may wish to tune out of this program for the next hour if you are impacted by stories of x, y, and z"*

Some producers make a separate set of CRN-specific intros/outros which they add to their programs in post-production. This can be a great way to ensure that you cater to both local and national audiences. Ask us if you want to hear some examples.

Some producers keep their national program versions completely clean, without mentions of either home stations or CRN. That can be fine too, let us know if this approach sounds good for you.

We understand you're likely to have numerous other acknowledgements to make during your program, which is fine. However, please let CRN staff know if there will be sponsor acknowledgements.

If you want to talk about other ways, you can make your program adaptable to the CRN program grid and a national audience, please reach out to the team at crn@cbaa.org.au.