

UNIT 11 RADIO BROADCAST SYSTEMS AND MANAGEMENT PATTERNS

Structure

- 11.0 Introduction
- 11.1 Objectives
- 11.2 Broadcast Systems and Patterns in Different Countries
- 11.3 Australia
- 11.4 Canada
- 11.5 Japan
- 11.6 Nigeria
- 11.7 The United Kingdom
- 11.8 The United States of America
- 11.9 Let Us Sum Up
- 11.10 Check Your Progress: Possible Answers

11.0 INTRODUCTION

Radio as an institution and an art has been with us for nearly eight decades. It has been used in both times of war and peace by democratic as well as dictatorial regimes of different countries. Each country has evolved a system of broadcasting that suits its cultural, social, economic and political needs. The system may be in the public or private domain, depending on the nature of programme services envisaged or on offer.

So far, we have discussed the evolution of the Indian system of broadcasting including Public Service, Local, Community and Commercial broadcasting. This unit introduces you to some of the broadcasting systems in different parts of the world to expose you to how they are structured and managed. You will study as to how Radio broadcasting developed in different countries in accordance with the communication needs of listeners and the country's policy of governance.

11.1 OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, you should be able to:

- describe the broadcast systems in different countries;
- outline the services offered by different broadcasting systems;
- discuss their structures;
- examine their regulatory processes; and
- analyse their funding patterns.

11.2 BROADCAST SYSTEMS AND PATTERNS IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

Radio services may be for pure entertainment or education or information or for commerce or in combination of one or more of these. They are provided under different systems of management- Government, public authority, educational bodies, NGOs or commercial enterprises which function under the regulations set out in the broadcast charter, licence or agreement. Each organisation creates its own management structure to carry out the functions of broadcasting. Funding is one of the important aspects in any organisation. The inflow and outflow of finances governs the activities connected with programme generation and transmission. These features of a broadcasting set up are placed under services, regulations, structures and funding.

Services

The services are grouped on the basis of territory or the content of communication. Geographically, they are referred to as national, regional, local or external services. Content-wise, they could be public service which includes education, information, and entertainment or commercial, educational or community service. The services can be provided by the one or more broadcasting organisation in a country.

Regulations

In the early days, both civic bodies and educational institutions took to radio broadcasting. The power of the medium made several governments realise its potential and they entered the broadcast arena as a participant or regulator or both. By now each country has either enacted legislation or formulated regulations to ensure that broadcasting is on a sound basis in the best interest of the people and the State.

Structures

Organisational structures are born out of the necessity for a clear well defined system which is required for execution of the work- responsibilities. It helps the staff members to relate to each other, coordinate their activities and achieve the organisational goals. A well-conceived structure helps to nurture a suitable work-culture and maximise the effectiveness of a radio station.

Funding

The success or failure of an organisation depends to a large extent on the procurement of finances and its utilisation. It is axiomatic that no institution can be fully autonomous unless it has financial independence. It is often said, 'he who pays the piper, calls the tune'. This is especially relevant in the case of broadcasting.

It will be of interest to understand how different broadcasting systems have evolved in various countries over a period of time keeping in view their specific needs. In the following sections, we shall examine different funding patterns, structures, regulation and the programme services in vogue in a few radio organisations in different continents-Australia, Canada, Japan, Nigeria, the USA and the UK.

11.3 AUSTRALIA

Australia's broadcasting system has four diverse broadcasting sectors for radio and television. They are:

- a) Commercial
- b) National
- c) Public Sector
- d) Special Broadcasting Service

The first commercial station in Australia went on the air on 13th November, 1923. However, considering the public interest, there were demands for a completely government funded national broadcasting corporation. Thus in June, 1932, the Australian Broadcasting Commission, now the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) was established. ABC was modelled very closely on the British Broadcasting Corporation and the basic objective was to "serve all sections and to satisfy the diversified tastes of the public".

Being a very vast continent, Australia's population has small pockets where even newspapers reach late. The ethnic diversity and the presence of the aborigines also led to demands for meeting the broadcasting needs of various groups. There were specific needs of music lovers to have specialised music programmes. The public broadcasting sector was thus established in 1974. The demands of a multi-cultural society further led to the creation of the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) in 1978. Under this service, "Ethnic Australia" radio stations have services in more than 50 languages.

Regulations

Australia had its principal broadcast legislation in 1948. The Broadcasting and Television Act, 1948 established the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal (ABT), an independent statutory authority with extensive regulatory powers. The regulatory system, however, is not uniform for the four sectors, viz. the commercial, national, public sectors and special broadcasting services. In each of these four cases, the planning proposal is subjected to technical considerations by the Department of Communications. Once the department is satisfied, the station is allocated a frequency and is placed in the planning register of the department.

This is available for public comment for 30 days. In the case of new commercial and public stations, a similar but more active public scrutiny is exercised and ultimately the ABT decides whether commercial or public licence should be granted.

For commercial radio the following are prohibited:

- a) more than one metropolitan commercial broadcasting station in a state;
- b) more than four metropolitan commercial broadcasting stations in Australia;
- c) more than four commercial broadcasting stations in any one state; and
- d) more than eight commercial broadcasting stations in Australia.

ABC and SBS are not licenced broadcasting operations, whereas commercial and public broadcasters are licenced to provide radio and television services which are reviewed for renewal every three years. However, for the government funded ABC and SBS services, there is no such three year review, though their effectiveness is gauged from time to time.

In 1976, the Green Report, an inquiry into the Australian broadcasting system was prepared by the Department of Post and Telecommunication (now the department of communication) under the department's Head, F.J. Green. The report made several recommendations on planning, licensing and funding of the Australian Broadcasting Services. As a result, the Australian Broadcasting Control Board was abolished. The Board's technical and planning functions were ascribed to the Department of Communication and licensing and regulatory responsibilities to the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal (ABT). The ABT also publishes a complete listing of the commercial radio and television licensee companies.

Structure

Management and administrative practices in Australian broadcasting vary drastically from sector to sector. The parameters for management structure, personnel, policies and procedures were set out first in the Broadcasting Act and then in the Australian Broadcasting Corporation Act. The Corporation has a Board of Directors who are appointed by the Government. The Board appoints the Managing Director who is the Chief Executive Officer. The Board is responsible to the Parliament and the Minister of Communications. The ABC employees enjoy most of the benefits associated with public service employment in Australia.

The Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) is governed by a part time Chairperson and 6 part time members appointed by the Government. The Governor General of Australia appoints the Executive Director of SBS.

The public broadcasting stations have individual management and administrative structures. Their policies are developed by the stations' part time Board and are implemented by a full time station manager appointed by the Board. Many of these stations are run in association with college and university campuses with plenty of student participation.

The commercial radio stations are operated on conventional business practices and there is stiff competition for the advertising revenue. Profit motive, of course, is the prime concern and the radio and television advertising standards are determined by the ABT. Time standards for radio restrict advertisements up to a maximum of 18 minutes per hour of broadcast.

Funding

The main source of funding for both ABC and SBC is the annual grant from the Government. ABC prepares its annual budget for the consideration of the Parliament which votes the allocation. Normally, the grant is equivalent to about 80 percent of the expenditure budget. The remaining 20 percent is met from internal generation of revenue through network services, concerts etc. No money could be raised through commercial advertisements which are forbidden.

As in the case of ABC, the SBS receives annual grants from the government. In addition to this, SBS is authorised to supplement its revenue through advertisements. For this purpose, it is permitted to broadcast five minutes of ads in an hour of programming. The advertisements include sponsorship announcements.

11.4 CANADA

Canada, a very large country spread over 10 million square kilometers and sparsely populated with less than 30 million population is often considered as the cultural backyard of the United States. In 1929, the Royal Commission of Radio Broadcasting recommended a publicly owned national radio network. In 1932 a national public radio service was set up by the Canadian Parliament. Though there were private stations, all stations were considered part of the single Canadian Broadcasting system and were to provide only Canadian programming. In 1952, two television stations were established by the public network. At present there are over 2000 public and private radio and television stations.

The Canadian Radio Broadcasting Corporation (CRBC) was formed in 1932. The mandate of CRBC was not only to provide and deliver to all regions of the country, entertainment and information programmes that were primarily Canadian, but also to regulate all radio broadcasting in Canada. CRBC showed the potential of public broadcasting and laid the groundwork for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC).

The CBC was created on November 2, 1936 to provide a national radio service and to some extent in response to the growing fear of American domination of Canadian airwaves. For the next few years CBC was behind all broadcasting innovation in Canada.

Services

To serve the needs of geographically remote Northern regions, the CBC operates radio and television services to the North in English, French and eight aboriginal languages. Today CBC operates four radio networks, two each in English and French. In English, CBC Radio One provides news, information and general entertainment programming, usually on AM. CBC Radio airs arts and culture programming, normally on FM. In French, these services are replicated. The radio networks do not accept advertising. An international broadcasting service, Radio Canada International (RCI) is also available on short wave which provides programming in seven languages. A domestic shortwave service for Northern Quebec is also available.

Structure

The CBC is wholly owned by the Canadian Government and in turn by the people. A Board of Directors of up to twelve members comprising of prominent citizens from the various fields, representing all regions of the country is responsible for the overall CBC performance. The day-to-day operations are managed by professional staff and officers of the Corporation. Directors are appointed by the Governor in Council (that is, the Federal Cabinet) for renewable five-year terms. All Directors, including the Chairperson and the President hold office during good behaviour and may only be removed for a reason. They owe their obligation of good faith to the CBC and its public service mandate and not to the interests of the government. There is also a provision for an Ombudsman who reviews the serious and unresolved public complaints related to the discharge of its mandate.

Regulation

The 1932 Canadian Radio Broadcasting Act declared the air waves to be a scarce public resource and all broadcast licences a temporary monopoly to be operated as part of a single national system in the public interest. This 'public trustee' concept has been a major theme in all subsequent legislations and regulations.

In 1958, under Prime Minister Diefenbaker and partially on the recommendations of the Fowler Commission, Canada enacted the Broadcasting Act of 1958, creating a Board of Broadcast Governors (BBG). This 15 member group carried out the regulatory functions of the CBC, while leaving the CBC as public broadcaster. In 1968, the Canadian Radio-Television Commission (CRTC) replaced BBG and added the regulation of cable television to its responsibilities. The body was renamed the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission in 1976.

As a corporate entity, the CBC is bound by all laws of general application which relate to its operations. Two bodies however, have a specific measure of control over the CBC, the Parliament and the CRTC. Since Parliament has the jurisdiction to regulate the broadcast system, it has the prerogative to establish general principles relating to this field.

The CBC submits an annual report to the Parliament through the Minister of Canadian Heritage on its operations. The CRTC, Canada's general broadcast regulator is an independent agency, vested with administrative and quasi-judicial authority. Despite these controls, CBC enjoys full freedom of expression, journalistic, creative and programming independence and is known to be Canada's finest broadcast news service.

Funding

CBC is primarily financed by public funds. It submits a yearly corporate plan to the Minister of Communications. The plan also includes the budget of the Corporation for the following fiscal year. The Treasury Board may approve or reject the budget. Then it is taken up by the Parliament. Once the estimates for a financial year have been approved, the CBC submits a summary of the corporate plan, as per the actual funding which it has been allocated.

Check Your Progress: 1

- Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.
2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

Fill in the blanks:

- 1) Australian Broadcasting Corporation was modelled very closely on the.....
- 2)is an independent statutory authority in Australia with extensive regulatory powers.
- 3)made several recommendations on planning, licensing and funding of the Australian Broadcasting Services.
- 4) The main source of funding for both ABC and SBC is.....
- 5) The mandate of CRBC was to provide entertainment and information programmes and also to.....
- 6) CRBC showed the potential of public broadcasting and laid the groundwork for.....
- 7) The CBC was created to provide a national radio service and also in response to.....
- 8) Canadian Radio-Television Commission (CRTC) now known as Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission replaced.....and.....was added its responsibilities.

11.5 JAPAN

Nearly 75% of the terrain of Japan is rugged and mountainous and virtually uninhabitable. Approximately 15% is devoted to agriculture, leaving only about 10% for people to actually live on. The population of Japan is nearly 126 million consisting predominantly of Japanese and some ethnic groups. Nippon Hoso Kyokai (NHK) is Japan's public service broadcaster. Its origin dates back to March 22, 1925 when Tokyo Broadcasting Station, the predecessor of NHK transmitted the first radio broadcast. Two other radio stations, Osaka Broadcasting Station and Nagoya Broadcasting Station made their first radio broadcasts on June 1 and July 15, 1925 respectively. The three stations were combined to form the national broadcasting corporation, Nippon Hoso Kyokai (Japan Broadcasting Corporation). The twin mottos of NHK are, "Reform and Action" and "Openness and Participation".

Structure

The Board of Governors is the decision making body for every important matter concerning NHK's management policy and operation, including the annual budget, operational plan and basic programming policy. The Board consists of 12 Governors from the fields of education, culture, science and industry capable of making impartial decisions and fair judgments about public welfare. The Governors are approved by both Houses of the Diet on behalf of the people of Japan and appointed by the Prime Minister. The Governors also appoint the President, by a vote of not less than 9 of the 12 Governors and the auditors approve the appointment by the President, of the Vice President and Directors. Not more than four Governors can belong to any one political party.

The Board of Governors has the power to dismiss a President or an auditor who is deemed unable to perform or to have acted contrary to his duties. By the same reckoning, the President may dismiss the Vice President or a Director with the consent of the Governors. The Prime Minister may also dismiss the Governors who do not satisfy the conditions of appointment.

Services

With the broadcasting headquarter in Tokyo, NHK has 54 stations throughout Japan and 32 bureaus overseas. NHK operates three national radio services; Radio 1, Radio 2, FM Radio and NHK World Radio Japan.

Radio 1 is a channel of news current affairs and practical information and guidance in ever day life. It provides information to people at the times of disaster and emergencies by making the best possible use of radio's speed and mobility. Radio 2 is oriented towards educational programming and presents language learning programmes and programmes based on high school curriculum. It also broadcasts news reports in languages other than Japanese for foreign nationals living in Japan. FM radio is NKH's music channel focusing on classical music as well as regional programming. NHK World Radio Japan is the external radio service available on short wave for foreign listeners.

Protection of lives and property of citizens, enhancing culture, welfare of the people particularly the elderly and the disabled and contribution to the healthy evolution of democracy are some of the objectives of NKH. In view of the potential earthquake in the Tokai region, NHK has evolved a disaster information reporting system.

Regulation

The Broadcast Law and the Wireless Telegraphy Law were established in Japan in 1950. Since then, broadcasting in Japan has developed with the public service broadcaster NHK as well as the commercial broadcasters. The Broadcast Law of 1950 stipulates fundamental conditions to enable NHK to fulfill its mission as a public station relying on receiving fees for its income. A key feature of the Broadcast Law is that NHK's freedom is carefully guaranteed in terms of the activities and structure of the corporation. The Broadcast Law also provides for a right of reply for anyone affected by the broadcasting of untrue matter and obligation of correction.

Funding

NHK is prohibited from making a profit and from broadcasting commercial advertisements. It depends for its income on the receiving fees paid by viewers, while the main source of revenue for commercial broadcasters is income from commercials. According to its 2003 Annual Report, NHK received almost 97 % of its total operating income of over 652 billion yen from licence fees.

11.6 NIGERIA

Nigeria is located on the west coast of Africa and is the most populous country in Africa. Today Nigeria's population is 103.9 million and growing rapidly at 3% with 250 ethnic groups. More than 250 languages are spoken in Nigeria. The official language is English but less than half of the population speaks English. About half of the population, living mostly in the North are Muslims, another 40 percent living in the south are Christian and the rest follow traditional beliefs. Nigeria was under military rule for a long time and returned to civilian rule in the year 1999.

Broadcasting in Nigeria started on 19th December, 1932, the day BBC launched its short wave programme service called the Empire Service from Daventry. It was intended to develop political, cultural and economic links between Britain and the English speaking subjects. Nigeria probably became the first African nation to have broadcasting. There was a time when BBC Empire Service was provided on loud speakers through what was known as Radio Distribution Services. In 1951, the Nigerian Broadcasting Service (NBS) was created as part of the department of information with a measure of autonomy. NBS organised its own administrative structure, hired its own staff and produced its own programmes and assumed control over all the provincial radio stations in various parts of the country. Later on April 1, 1957, NBS became the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation. When military rule commenced in Nigeria in 1966, the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) was created.

The Nigerian government has granted approval to 16 private operators to run radio stations. The new stations would operate on a commercial basis while the other four including a university radio would run specialised broadcasting. Nigeria has 20 radio stations, including RayPower FM which was the first private station established in 1994. The stations aim to bridge the information gap in remote areas and foster democratic ideals in Nigeria.

The policies for radio broadcasting are guided by the following objectives:

- The provision of efficient broadcasting services to the entire people of the Federation of Nigeria based on national objectives and aspirations and to external audiences in accordance with Nigeria's foreign policy.
- The provision of professional and comprehensive coverage of Nigerian culture, the promotion of cultural growth through research, and the dissemination of the results of such research studies for the benefit of the public.
- The positive contribution to the development of the Nigerian society and the promotion of national unity by ensuring a balanced presentation of views from all parts of the country.
- To ensure the prompt delivery of accurate information to the people.
- To provide opportunities for a free, enlightened, and responsible discussion of important issues and to enhance useful two-way contact between the public and those in authority.
- The provision of special broadcasting services in the field of education and in all other areas where the national policy calls for special attention.
- To promote orderly and meaningful development of broadcasting in the nation through technical improvements, adequate staff training and development, and staff exchange with other nations, and
- To promote research into various aspects of the communications media and their effects on the Nigerian society.

Structure, Regulation and Funding

Broadcasting in Nigeria is regulated at Federal and State levels through government broadcast policies. FRCN is administered by the government through a Board of Directors which is responsible to the Minister of Information. Both the Board and the Chief Executive are appointed by the Minister of Information. Being administered the government, the fund flow for FRCN is the responsibility of the Government.

Check Your Progress: 2

- Note:** 1) Use the space below for your answers.
2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

1) Mention the names of the three radio stations which were combined to form the national broadcasting corporation, NHK.

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.....

2) Which laws govern the regulation of broadcasting in Japan?

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3) How did broadcasting evolve in Nigeria?

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.....

11.7 THE UNITED KINGDOM

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland comprises England, Wales, Scotland and the Northern Ireland. It is a member state of the European Community. The non-white population which constitutes 4.7 percent of the total population of U.K., comprises ethnic minorities of Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and West Indian origins. The UK is the principal member of the Commonwealth, an association of independent states including India.

Broadcasting in Britain has traditionally been based on the principle of public service. Two public bodies –the British Broadcasting Corporation and Radio Authority provide radio services throughout Britain. The authorities work to broad requirements and objectives defined by the Parliament but are otherwise independent in the day-to-day conduct of business. The independence enjoyed by the two authorities carries with it certain obligations over programmes and programme content.

Services

The BBC provides a range of services including five radio programmes for general reception throughout the UK. It has one additional programme service for each of Scotland and Northern Ireland and two for Wales and number of local radio stations serving England and the channel Islands, and community radio service in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. These are referred to as Home Service. BBC does not broadcast commercial advertisements. The broadcasts provide a comprehensive service of news and information, music and other entertainment, education, consumer advice and coverage of local events and often listeners get a chance to air their views, using the phone-in technique. Local radio is an important segment of British broadcasting which seeks to serve as community radio. The ethnic minorities make use of the local radio for their cultural enrichment.

The BBC provides a World Service using English and 35 other languages for over 750 hours a week. The main objectives are to give news, reflect British opinion and project British life culture and developments in science and industry. It has news bureaus in different parts of the world.

The Radio Authority awards licences and contracts to programme companies. Each company provides a radio service to meet the information and entertainment needs of the local audiences. The companies operate on commercial basis and their programmes content depends largely on the size and composition of the population in the areas they operate. Commercial advertisements form an integral part of their services.

Regulations

The constitution, finances and obligations of the BBC are governed by a legal Charter and by a Licence and Agreement. The Charter is a grant from the Sovereign to undertake broadcasting activity. The licence agreement is between the Secretary of State for National Heritage and BBC's Board of Governors. It specifies in detail the governance and public service regulations of the BBC. The agreement is between the Secretary of State for National Heritage and BBC's Board of Governors. The agreement includes programming standard requirements and several features relating to accountability.

The Charter includes a number of provisions to ensure that the BBC is accountable to the public. The Charter stipulates that the broadcasts must carry programmes of information, education and entertainment as public services. The mandatory provision for establishing the National Development Councils for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales is aimed at ensuring that the BBC in its programming is responsive to public needs.

The Broadcasting Standards Commission (BSC) is another institutional framework which monitors programmes, examines complaints and undertakes research. BBC is required to reflect the Commission's code of practice. They deal with complaints from the public of unfair treatment, infringement of privacy, standards of taste and decency and portrayal of violence and sexual conduct. The BSC adjudicates on complaints relating to any breach of the above.

The programme companies which receive licences from the Radio Authority are under its supervision in regard to programmes and advertising. It operates codes of advertising standards and programme sponsorship. The codes prohibit political and religious advertising, and advertising of cigarettes or betting. The basic principles to be observed include that the programmes and advertising be:

- legal, honest and truthful;
- prepared with a sense of responsibility to the consumers and society; and
- conform to the principles of fair competition as generally accepted in business.

The codes of Broadcast Standards Commission are applicable to the broadcasts of the radio stations functioning under the Radio Authority.

Structure

The BBC is a corporate body, governed by a Board of Governors, as provided in the Charter. The Board has 12 Governors including the Chairman, Vice Chairman appointed by the Queen on the advice of the Government. The Board is ultimately responsible for all aspects of broadcasting by the BBC. The Governors appoint the Director General, the Corporation's Chief Executive Officer. The Board of Management and the Director General are common for both radio and television services which are under a Managing Director. The News Services and Engineering Services are headed by a Director each. There are separate Directors to take care of Finances, Public Affairs and Personnel. Sales and services constitute an important segment of management. There are also BBC's News Bureaus in different parts of the world each under a staff correspondent.

Unlike the BBC, which is a programme producing and broadcasting organisation, the Radio Authority is a licencing and consulting authority. The licencees are companies which provide the programme service. Each company has its own structure, depending on its size and the magnitude of operations.

Funding

The Home Services of the BBC are financed primarily from the sale of television licences. There is no licence fee for radio. Licence income is supplemented by profits from trading activities such as programme exports, publications and other merchandising connected with BBC programmes. The World Service is funded by a grant from the foreign office.

11.8 THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The United States of America (USA) is dotted with thousands of broadcast stations-commercial as well as public. The roots of radio broadcasting go deep into the beginning of American broadcasting. Many of the stations which pioneered broadcasting were non-commercial educational stations. The local communities also set up community broadcasting centres. The basic principles of American broadcasting include:

- the airwaves belong to the people;
- the federal government should regulate broadcasting to establish order on the broadcast spectrum; and
- the privately owned stations can broadcast in the interest of the public.

The Radio act of 1927 and all subsequent broadcast legislations are based on these three tenets.

With a view to developing programmes that will be responsible to the interest of the people, National Public Radio was created as a private non-profit organisation. In addition, the Voice of America was set up as part of the external publicity arm of the US government.

Voice of America

Voice of America (VOA) is the external service of the US. The first VOA broadcast originated from New York City on February 24, 1942. At present, VOA reaches people in different regions of the world with programming in 55 languages. VOA broadcasts through RealAudio on the Internet shortwave, AM, FM and satellite broadcasts. Each service comprises news, current affairs, spoken-word programmes and music. The programmes aim to project the image of the U.S. and explain its policies from time to time.

The VOA is funded by the U.S. Government. For the fiscal year 2003, the US Congress appropriated \$160 million for VOA. The headquarter of VOA is located in Washington D.C. VOA has more than thirty correspondents at twenty two news bureaus located in many countries.

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) is a private international radio service to Central Europe and the former Soviet Union, funded by the U.S. Congress. They serve listeners in countries stretching from Belarus to Bosnia and from the Arctic Sea to the Persian Gulf with daily news, analysis and current affairs programming to provide an account of events in their regions and the world. The service currently broadcasts in twenty nine languages.

RFE/RL, the VOA and other non military international broadcast services come under an umbrella organisation called the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) to oversee and guide them all. It is an independent federal entity. The BBG is composed of nine members. Eight are appointed by the President and confirmed by the US Senate and the ninth ex officio member is the Secretary of State.

Commercial Radio Stations

In the free market economy of the US, commercial radio advertising had a great potential. In 1922, AT&T established a radio station known as WEAJ which started selling 'airtime' and soon followed with a network of 38 radio stations. 'Sponsoring' of programmes by companies was found more profitable and acceptable than spot advertisement. It developed the strategy of contacting the advertising agencies for providing sponsors on payment of a commission. Later a new broadcasting network known as National Broadcasting Company (NBC) came into existence in 1926. Another network, CBS came a year later giving a fillip to commercial broadcasting throughout the country.

Community Broadcasting

As commercial and educational broadcasting expanded, they came in for criticism. The former was derisively referred to as 'toads' while the latter as the 'bores'. A new genre of broadcasting, known as community broadcasting began as part of public broadcasting. The radio stations invested the local community with a greater degree of direct influence. The establishment of the National Federation of Community Broadcasters (NFCB) in 1975 gave an institutional expression to the community radio movement. NFCB provided an important impetus to the movement leading to strengthening of the existing radio stations and setting up new radio stations. The NFCB had seventy members and 120 associate members by 1980. The setting up of the National Public Radio under the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967 had its impact on the expansion of the community radio.

National Public Radio

National Public Radio (NPR) was conceived as a radio that, "will serve the individual: promote personal growth; regard the individual differences among men with respect and joy rather than derision and hate; celebrate the human experience as infinitely varied; and encourage a sense of active constructive participation, rather than apathetic helplessness.

NPR's article of incorporation specified that it would both produce and distribute the programming. It was created to provide leadership in 'national newsgathering and production and act as a permanent nationwide interconnection of non-commercial stations.

NPR constantly strove to create a coalition of public radio broadcasters. When NPR was established, it had ninety public radio stations as Charter members. With a dedicated radio news gathering and production apparatus, NPR provides nationwide interconnection of non-commercial stations with news, current affairs and programmes of public interest. Now it produces and distributes programmes to 730 public radio stations.

The board of directors of NPR is responsible for the governance of the corporation. The board sets the policies and overall priorities of NPR management, monitors its performance, and provides financial oversight. The board consists of seventeen Directors, ten of whom are managers of NPR member stations and are elected to the board by their fellow member stations. The seven remaining Directors include the President of NPR and the Chairman of NPR foundation and five prominent members of the public selected by the Board and confirmed by NPR member stations.

Funding

Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) was put under a legislative enactment to disburse funds to development of radio and television. This body is politically insulated. NPR receives funds from CPB. It also receives funds from sponsors. Underwriting of specific programmes of corporate bodies is another source of funding. NPR accepts contributions, legacies from individuals and trusts.

Regulations

The Federal Communication Commission (FCC) is the agency to supervise broadcasting in the US. It was established by the Communications Act of 1934. It is composed of five Commissioners who are nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate for a five-year term. Its functions among other things, include:

- Allocation of frequencies to individual stations
- Grant of licences and regulating operations of the stations

The FCC does not control every aspect of communication and broadcasting. It does not regulate the broadcast network or programming practices of individual stations. It does not control the content of broadcasting although it has rules governing obscenity, slander and political broadcasts. It oversees the implementation of what is known as 'fairness doctrine'.

Structure and Funding of Commercial Radio Stations

The commercial radio stations are independent entities while some form part of the major national networks. They are corporate bodies and as such their organisational structure is in accordance with corporate practices. The Voice of America which is part of the Government of the United States is organised on the pattern of an information agency. They have their news bureaus in different parts of the world. The headquarter of National Public Radio is located in Washington DC and has a production centre in Los Angeles and 30 bureaus and offices throughout the world. More than 700 people work to provide news and cultural programming.

The commercial radio stations derive their revenue from advertisements. The non-commercial radio stations get contributions from the community or from donor organisations particularly public trusts. The NPR has a dual system of getting funds. The government of the United States provides an annual grant. Private foundations also provide support. NPR also receives financial support from corporate sponsors who receive 'on air' acknowledgement. Through sponsorship contributions, corporate bodies can communicate their brand messages while generating community goodwill.

Check Your Progress: 3

- Note:**
- 1) Use the space below for your answers.
 - 2) Compare your answers with those given at the end of this unit.

Fill in the blanks:

- 1)provides public service radio broadcasting services throughout Britain.
- 2) Licences and contracts to programme companies in Britain are awarded by.....
- 3) The constitution, finances and obligations of the BBC are governed by.....

- 4) The.....is an important institutional framework which monitors programmes, examines complaints and undertakes research in Britain.
- 5)is an umbrella organisation which oversees and guides the various international broadcast services in the USA.
- 6) The establishment of gave an institutional expression to the community radio movement in America.
- 7)was put under an Act to distribute funds to development of radio and television.
- 8) The agency which supervises broadcasting in the U.S. is.....

11.9 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we had a look at the broadcasting systems in different continents- including America, Africa, Asia Pacific and Europe and studied how Radio broadcasting developed in accordance with the communication needs of listeners and the country's policy of governance.

You saw that there is generally a Public Service Broadcasting (PSB) in almost all countries where emphasis is laid on education. PSB is funded either by Government or by licence fee. Commercial broadcasting which caters to the entertainment needs of listeners relies heavily on advertisement revenues. The number of broadcasting services provided by each country varies – some countries provide community broadcasting as well as external broadcasting services. Plurality in broadcast services help the listeners to access to different patterns of programming. Countries with regional and linguistic diversities organise radio services at the national, regional and local levels. Each broadcasting system has its own organisational structure but there is similarity of approach. We observed that some big countries have a number of overseas services in tune with their foreign policy objectives.

The frequency spectrum is a scarce commodity. As such, there is a controlling agency which allocates frequencies to radio stations. There is a regulatory mechanism to oversee broadcasting which in several cases include programme content as well.

11.10 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Check Your Progress: 1

- 1) British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)
- 2) Australian Broadcasting Tribunal (ABT)
- 3) The Green Report
- 4) Annual grant from the Government
- 5) regulate all radio broadcasting in Canada
- 6) Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC)
- 7) The growing fear of American domination of Canadian airwaves
- 8) BBG, the regulation of cable television

Check Your Progress: 2

- 1) Tokyo Broadcasting Station, Osaka Broadcasting Station and Nagoya Broadcasting Station were combined to form the national broadcasting corporation, NHK.
- 2) The Broadcast Law and the Wireless Telegraphy Law of 1950 govern regulation of broadcasting in Japan. The Broadcast Law guarantees freedom in terms of the activities and structure of the corporation. It also provides for a right of reply for anyone affected by the broadcasting of untrue matter and obligation of correction.
- 3) In 1951 the Nigerian Broadcasting Service (NBS) was created as part of the department of information with a measure of autonomy. NBS organised its own administrative structure, hired its own staff and produced its own programmes and assumed control over all the provincial radio stations in various parts of the country. On April 1, 1957, NBS became the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation. When military rule commenced in Nigeria in 1966, the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) was created.

Check Your Progress: 3

- 1) The British Broadcasting Corporation
- 2) Radio Authority
- 3) a legal Charter and by a Licence and Agreement.
- 4) Broadcasting Standards Commission (BSC)
- 5) Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG)
- 6) National Federation of Community Broadcasters (NFCB)
- 7) Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB)
- 8) Federal Communication Commission (FCC)