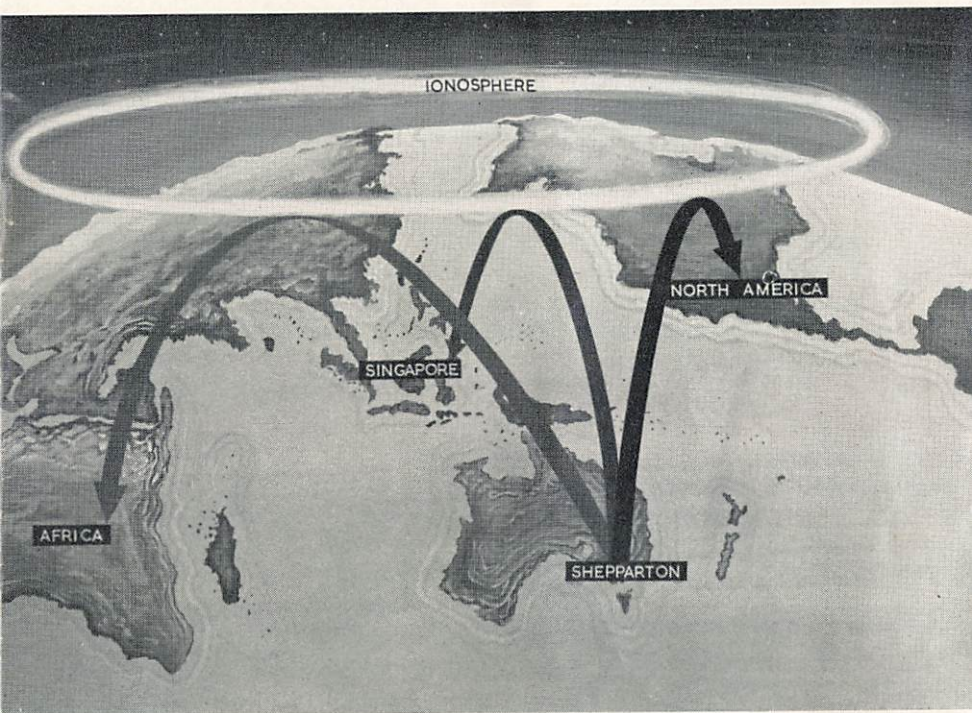


RADIO AUSTRALIA

SPANS THE WORLD



*Souvenir of Your Visit
to Shepparton Station*

MESSAGES OF WELCOME



Postmaster-General's Department,
G.P.O.,

MELBOURNE, Victoria.

Dear Visitor,

I want to welcome you to Radio Australia, Shepparton, and to express my appreciation for your interest in the work of this station.

Radio Australia has made millions of friends for Australia overseas and has earned a reputation second to none in international shortwave broadcasting.

The staff of the Postmaster-General's Department are naturally proud of this achievement and shares with the Australian Broadcasting Commission pleasure in providing such a vital radio link between Australia and the world.

This souvenir booklet will help you to appreciate the team work which exists between our two departments, and the work necessary to keep the service constantly on the air throughout every day and night of the year.

(Sgd.) G. N. Smith,
Director, Posts & Telegraphs,
VICTORIA.

Radio Australia,
SHEPPARTON.

To help you appreciate the intricate radio network at Radio Australia, Shepparton, the Postmaster-General's Department and the Australian Broadcasting Commission publicity departments have co-operated in preparing this brief booklet on the main aspects of the work of Radio Australia, the overseas service of the Australian Broadcasting Commission.

Many of the questions most frequently asked by station visitors have been answered in non-technical terms and other essential information of historical and general interest has been added.

We sincerely hope you have enjoyed your visit to the station and learned something of the tremendous task of constantly maintaining the "Voice from Down Under" to all parts of the world.

(Sgd.) W. Davidson,
(Station Manager).



Why Shepparton Was Chosen

Why was Shepparton chosen as the centre of one of the biggest radio stations in the world? This is a question frequently asked by visitors to Radio Australia.

With the intensification of the bombing of London during World War II and the growing risk of damage to the British Broadcasting Corporation's transmission station, the British and Australian governments discussed the establishment of an alternative station within the Commonwealth.

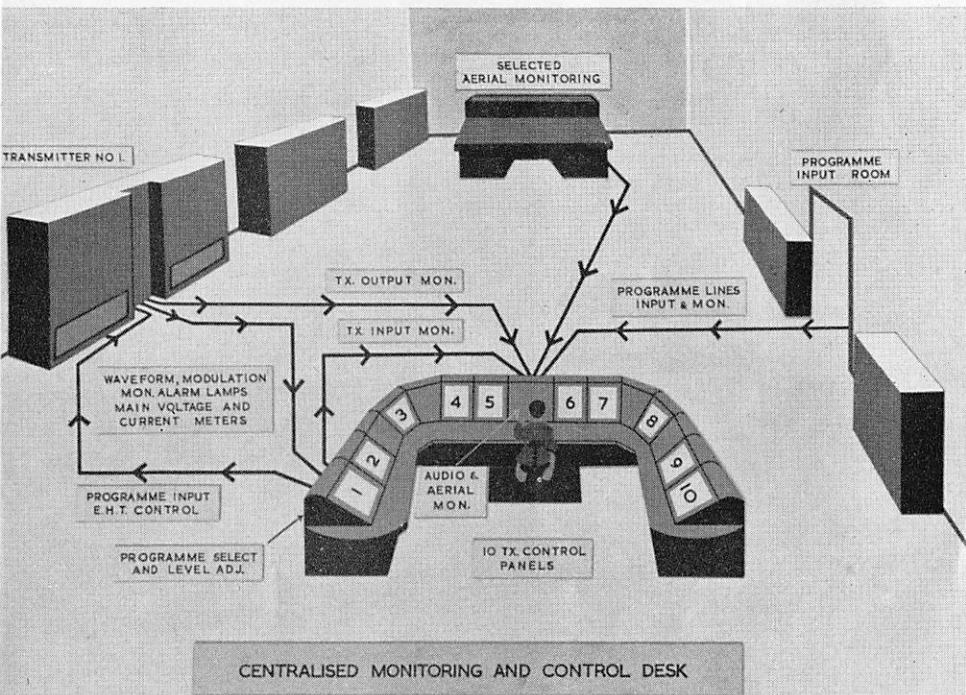
It was eventually agreed that Shepparton would be the site for a powerful high frequency transmitting centre.

A number of factors influenced the selection of the location. The flat country surrounding the station is ideal for the propagation of high frequency radio waves, while the nearby city of Shepparton ensures a source for staff and housing requirements. The availability of constant power supply, adequate water service for cooling of equipment was also considered as well as its location between, and reasonably near to, important programme supply centres of Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra.

From Shepparton, Radio Australia can transmit programmes to any part of the world at any time on the optimum frequency for the particular time of day and season of the year. The station also has power comparable with any other radio transmission station in the world.

Programme services originating in various States are collated in the Australian Broadcasting Commission's studios in Melbourne for Radio Australia where news bulletins are translated into the various languages, then relayed by land line to Shepparton.

One factor which appeals to overseas listeners to Radio Australia is that because Australian eastern standard time is 10 hours ahead of Greenwich, 15 hours ahead of New York, 18 ahead of San Francisco and just over 22 hours ahead of Honolulu they hear tomorrow's news today! One listener has described Radio Australia broadcasts as the "Voice of Tomorrow"!



WORK OF RADIO

Laugh of Kookaburra

Radio listeners around the world — and many in northern Australia — know the familiar call sign of Radio Australia, the hilarious laugh of the kookaburra.

Often referred to by listeners in the northern hemisphere as the "Voice from Down Under", Radio Australia is able to draw on the huge programming and technical resources of the Australian Broadcasting Commission's Home Service.

The service is designed to inform overseas people of Australian and world news and to provide information and entertainment for a variety of listeners from the sophisticated Japanese to the hill tribesmen of Thailand and Burma.

At the same time, Radio Australia presents a word picture of Australian life and thought, as well as helping to promote international goodwill and encourage overseas trade.

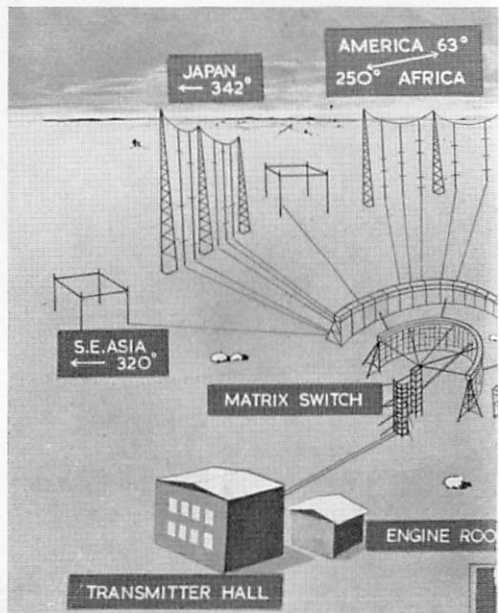
Programmes are planned to suit the requirements of the various target areas. In broadcasting to North America, Britain, Europe and the Far East the spoken word predominates, as the people in those countries listen to Radio Australia for information rather than entertainment. The reverse is the case in programmes directed to Asia, the Pacific region and most parts of Africa.

News bulletins are an important basic element of R.A. programmes which are broadcast every day of the year on a 23-hour basis. Thirty-nine bulletins are broadcast each day; 29 of world news and the remainder Australian news. Almost seven hours of news in English, Indonesian, French, Thai, Mandarin, Cantonese, Japanese and Vietnamese is broadcast daily.

At the same time, the talks programmes present a detailed picture of Australia and provide essential background to Australian and world news items. These talks are broadcast in English and foreign languages, and their content is determined largely by listeners' letters. Subjects include economic and international affairs, stock exchange and farm market reports, science and home news, and answers to listeners' questions.

An indication of Radio Australia's popularity may be gained from the enormous mail received last year which exceeded 250,000. In 1950, a year after the A.B.C. took over R.A., the rate was only 7,000 letters.

In addition, R.A. has topped the International Shortwave Listeners' Club Popularity poll for the last 10 years. This survey covered more than 30 short-wave broadcasting stations, including the B.B.C., Voice of America, Moscow Radio and Radio Peking.



DIO AUSTRALIA

R.A. Broadcasts in Six Asian Languages

Radio Australia was established by the Australian Government as a wartime measure to present the Allied case as seen in Australia to the peoples of Asia and the Far East, to bring home news to Australian forces overseas and to counter enemy broadcasts.

Originally known as "Australia Calling", Radio Australia, the overseas service of the Australian Broadcasting Commission, was inaugurated by the Prime Minister, Mr. R. G. (now Sir Robert) Menzies, in December, 1939. Then, Radio Australia was a division of the Department of Interior.

Initially, the languages used were English, French, German, Spanish, Italian and Dutch. But since the end of the war, however, the last four have been replaced by Asian languages — Indonesian, Japanese, Mandarin, Thai, Vietnamese and Cantonese.

The broadcasts were designed to inform the peoples of enemy-occupied countries of the Allied preparations to strike back and encourage local resistance. Enemy propaganda was examined and answered and great care was taken to give factual, objective news and sober comment on the course of the war.

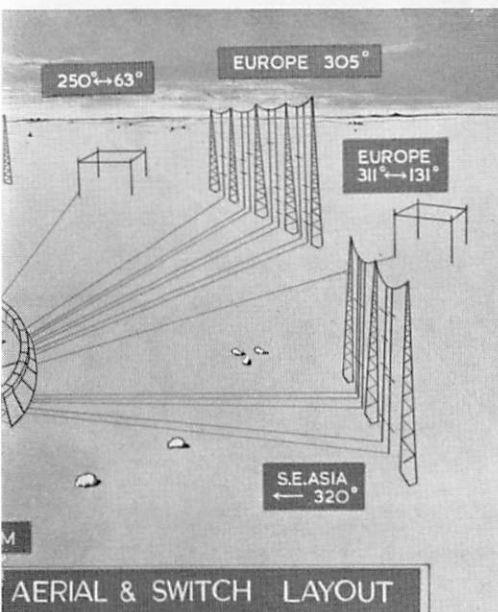
This policy of factual reporting, which gained listeners' confidence in times of adversity, has been maintained by the Australian Broadcasting Commission since 1950 when Radio Australia was placed under its control.

One of the most important developments of A.B.C. extension services has been the English language teaching programme for Indonesians. In October, 1959, the first of a series of 104 half-hour English lessons went on the air, beamed to Indonesia. Since then the programme has been repeated five times, and more than one million booklets have been sent to listeners requesting them.

Local Asian languages have been progressively introduced and this policy has earned a great deal of prestige for Australia and international shortwave popularity polls and annual mail clearly indicate that Radio Australia has earned an enormous following throughout the world.

Already, Radio Australia is the most quoted news media in South East Asia and many daily newspapers and radio stations in the region monitor the service and translate it into their own language to inform people living in areas radiating around Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok, Saigon and many other centres.

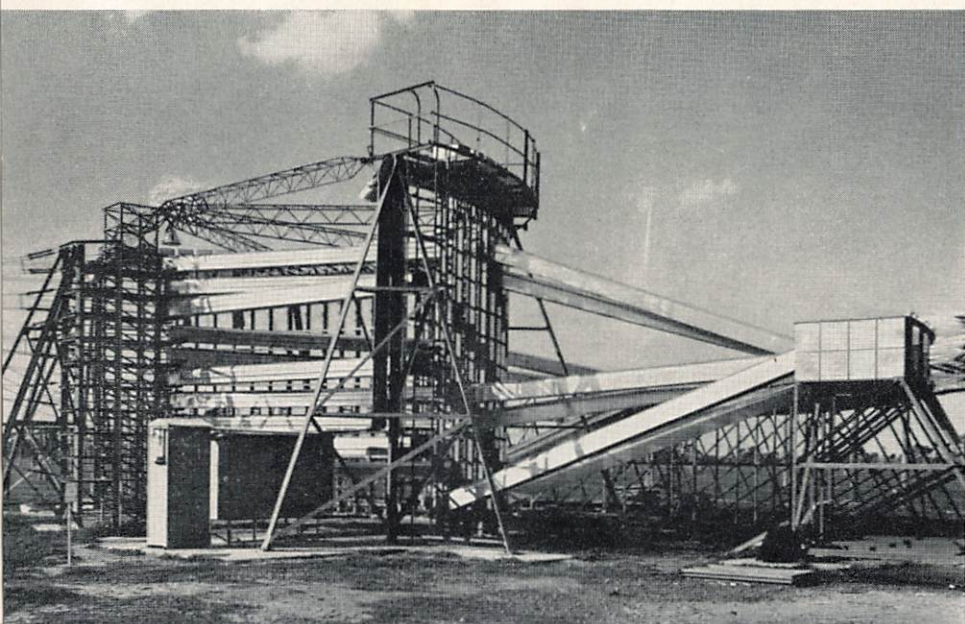
In addition to the news and talks programmes, R.A. transcription service has expanded enormously in recent months and an average of 80 programmes are being sent overseas each week to all parts of the world.

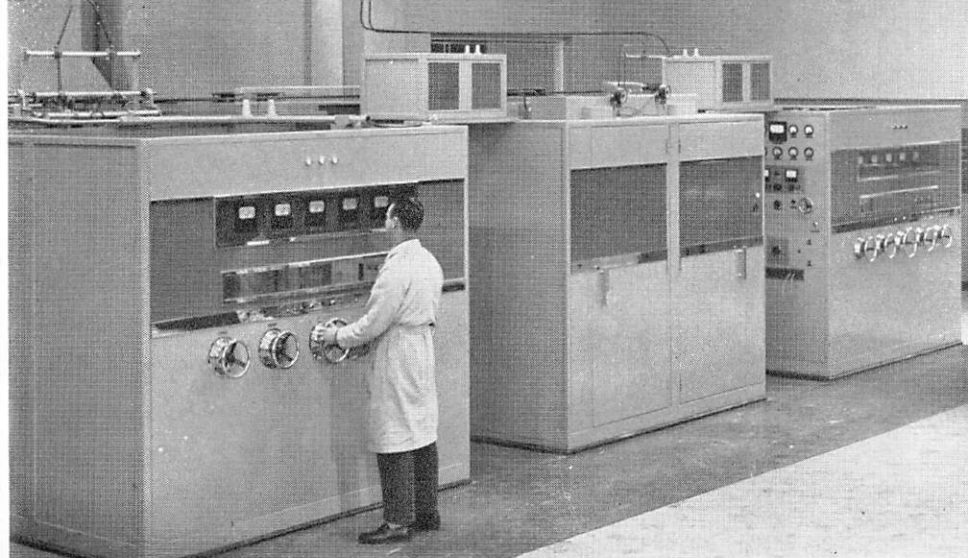




Radio Australia Newsroom, Melbourne

Matrix Switch, Shepparton





Transmitters

Service Second to None

Recent technical improvements to Radio Australia's shortwave station at Shepparton have boosted this service to make it second to none in the world.

The Shepparton station includes seven high-frequency transmitters, four of 100 K.W. and three of 50 K.W. power output, 36 aerials and associated switching gear. Any one of these transmitters can be switched to any of the five main aerial groups which stand in an arc around the transmitter building, poised ready to send to any part of the world.

The radiated power is directed at low angle over the surrounding country on three main beams. One goes to Europe across Asia with a reflex to South America, a North American beam reflexes to Africa, and there is a North Pacific transmission covering the Far East and Japan. The target directions can be reversed or slewed by simply altering the current fed to the aerials.

Split-second timing schedules between Shepparton and the Radio Australia studios in Melbourne are maintained through direct trunk lines.

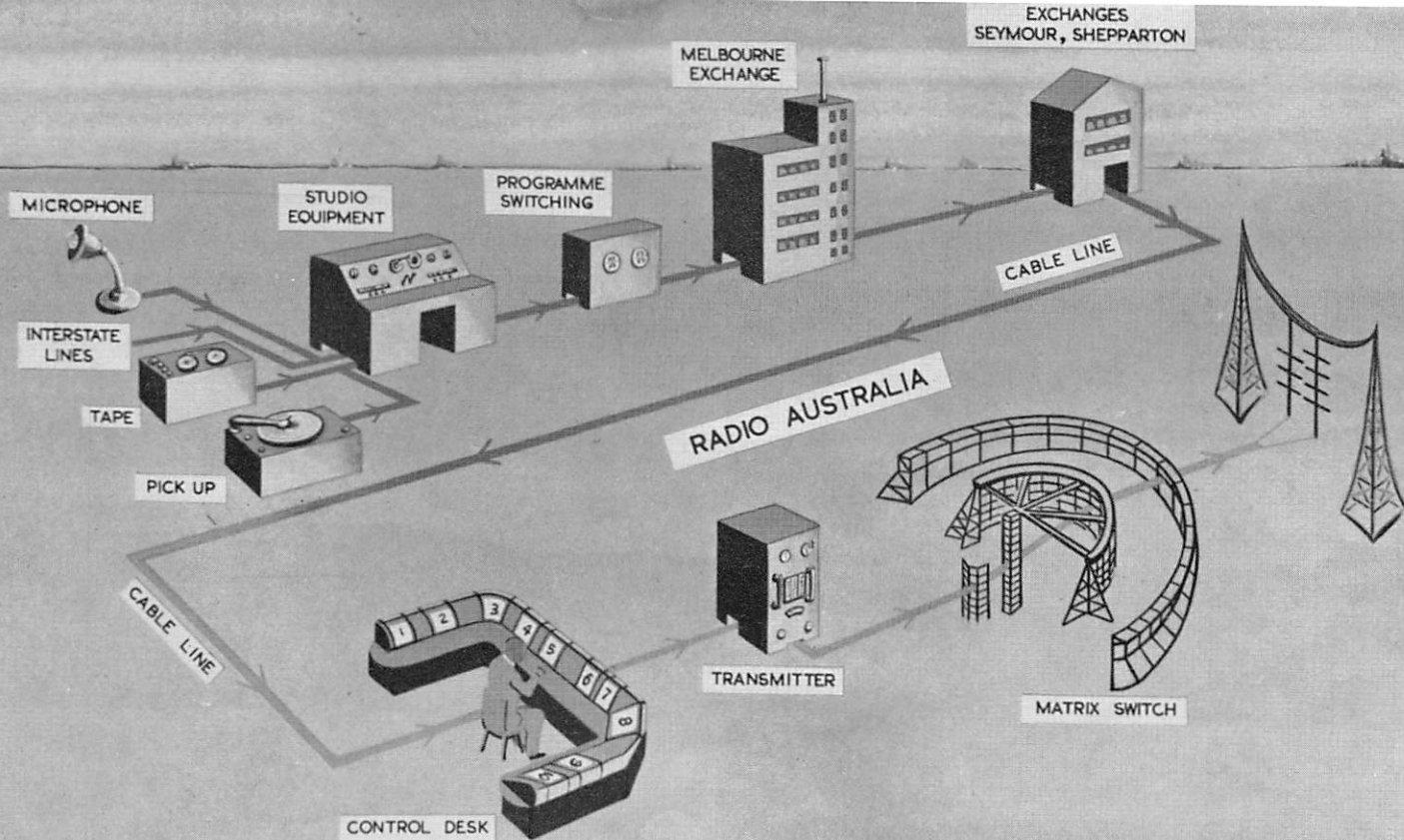
Pride of place on the station is held by the Matrix aerial switch designed and built by Post Office engineers. This switch, the first of its kind in the world, is used to connect any of the transmitters to any of the 36 aerials.

It consists of a steel framework 28' high in the form of a half cylinder of 25' radius. Mounted on a central pivot structure are ten arms 24' long, each connected to a transmitter. These sweep horizontally over the inside of the half cylinder. On the outside another thirty-six arms, each connected to an aerial terminal, move vertically. At the press of a switch inside the transmitter hall the arms of the chosen transmitter and aerial move together and so a connection is made.

Apart from the transmitter building and the aerials Radio Australia has seven cottages, sewerage plant, water treatment plant and power generating plant. Several hundred sheep are also grazed on the 600 acre site to reduce fire hazard.

This whole centre was designed and built, and is operated by the Postmaster-General's Department, for the Australian Broadcasting Commission. It cost about £1 million to construct.

At Lyndhurst, 27 miles from Melbourne, Radio Australia has a subsidiary station which transmits to the mid-Pacific Islands.



MICROPHONE - TRANSMITTER
PROGRAMME PATH