

Broadcast laws & guidelines

As a licensed broadcaster, SYN has to follow certain laws just like every other radio station in Australia. These laws must be followed by any presenter or producer on SYN. If not, the involved presenters and SYN will both be in a lot of trouble. Any legal action against SYN could cause it to lose its broadcasting licence, or make it so financially crippled that it would be forced to close down.

Defamation

To defame is to harm someone's reputation or lead people to ridicule, avoid or despise someone -eg- "Justin Bieber doesn't wash his hands after he goes to the toilet"



- You can defame someone on radio or TV, or through published writing or public speaking
- Defamation can be an accident, but it's still defamation.
- As well as individual people, a business or a school or any institution can also be defamed. -e.g.- "My school's canteen sells hot dogs that are past their used by date"
- You don't even need to name names. If it's obvious who you are talking about, it's just as bad. -e.g. - "My English teacher, I won't say his name, but he..."

Who Is Responsible?

Whoever said the remarks is responsible, even if it was a guest or a caller to your program. You, as the presenter of the show, are also responsible, and so is SYN because we gave you a program. A court of law will penalise all of the above.

But we are telling the truth!

Well that's okay...if you can prove it. If you said, "the Telstra Dome surface has more sand on it than Brighton Beach", you would have to prove the literal truth, that there is heaps of sand on the surface of Telstra Dome, and also the implied truth, that the groundskeepers are incompetent.

But we were just trying to be funny!

Well, that's okay...if it's obvious to the audience that it was satire. It's a fine line – If you're ever unsure get a few people to listen to your ideas first. Your intention is irrelevant –it's how it's received that matters.

But it is just my opinion!

“Fair comment” allows you say or write what you like, IF:

- The comments are identified as your honest opinion.
- It is an opinion a reasonable member of the community could also hold.
- The comments are relevant and in the public interest.
- It is based on true facts, and the facts are included within your opinion.

-eg- A movie or album review is considered “Fair Comment” because the general public is entitled to see both the facts and the opinion and decide for themselves what they think.

Codes of Practice

As a community radio station, SYN cannot:

- Broadcast anything which can be deemed as racist, homophobic or discriminatory on the basis of gender, religion, age, nationality, or physical or mental stability.
- Incite, encourage or present violence or brutality
- Promote the use of drugs including alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs
- As well as being against Community Broadcasting guidelines, these points are against SYN ethics. If any of these guidelines were breached your program would be removed from the air immediately.

