

Wednesday, 20 December, 2017

ABC Radio Australia launches new extended Morning show to PNG and the Pacific

ABC Radio Australia listeners in Papua New Guinea and the Pacific will get an additional two hours of dedicated live morning weekday programming in 2018 with the launch of a new morning news, talk and entertainment show from January 22.

Pacific Mornings will be presented by Seini F. Taumoepeau and Tahlea Aualiitia and incorporate Radio Australia's long-running, agenda-setting news program, ***Pacific Beat***, which returns with a new presenter, Catherine Graue.

Manager of **ABC Radio Australia**, James O'Brien said the extended morning show would allow greater coverage of daily and breaking PNG and Pacific news stories as well as introducing a broader mix of chat, music and entertainment.

"We're keeping ***Pacific Beat*** at the heart of our new morning schedule where it will continue to bring audiences across PNG and the Pacific the leading news stories and interviews with regional newsmakers," he said. "From next year, listeners will be able to tune in from 6.00 am (AEST) to listen to ***Pacific Beat*** followed by Seini and Tahlea to help start their day with a fresh take on what is happening in their region."

The Managing Editor of the ABC's Asia Pacific newsroom, Kellie Mayo, said ***Pacific Beat*** would be a shorter and more focused program broadcast from 6.00 am to 6.30 am and from 7.00 am to 7.30 am (AEST) each weekday morning offering original journalism from the ABC's trusted team of Pacific experts. The afternoon edition of ***Pacific Beat*** will continue from 3.00 pm to 3.30 pm (AEST) weekdays presented by Bruce Hill.

The remaining **ABC Radio Australia** schedule will continue to offer its PNG and Pacific listeners a rich mix of live content from the broader ABC which will include a new music program featuring local and indigenous Australian artists presented by Myf Warhurst and a national Australian ***Evenings*** program presented by Indigenous performer and broadcaster, Christine Anu. ABC RA's 2018 schedule will also include daily editions of ABC's leading news and current affairs programs ***AM***, ***The World Today*** and ***PM*** as well as the best of ABC Radio National including ***Late Night Live***, ***Big Ideas*** and ***RN Drive***.

Introducing Seini F. Taumoepeau

Seini F. Taumoepeau is a Tongan-Australian who first worked in radio at the age of 13. Seini was born in Australia and spent much of the first eight years of her life living with her grandparents and extended family in Tonga.

Seini studied contemporary music, media and indigenous studies at university and has worked in the media, arts, education, music and cultural sectors for more than 30 years. She feels a close connection to First Nations people and each year travels to Ti Tree to teach in the local school.

Introducing Tahlea Aualiitia

Tahlea Aualiitia has been working for ABC Radio Hobart for the past four years where she is currently producing their *Drive* program. Tahlea has also presented *Sunday Afternoons* on ABC Radio as well as ABC Radio Tasmania's statewide *Evenings* program.

Tahlea attended the University of Tasmania where she received First Class Honours in Journalism, Media and Communication. Tahlea also has a blog "*The Opposite of Adulthood*" where she writes about her "attempts to be a grown up".

Introducing Catherine Graue

Catherine Graue grew up in Lae, Papua New Guinea and speaks both Tok Pisin (PNG) and Bislama (Vanuatu). She is a producer/presenter with Australia Plus TV and Radio Australia and produced the award-winning #TalkAboutIt TV show broadcast internationally on Australia Plus TV. Catherine has recently spent time in Port Moresby working on the DFAT-funded Media for Development Initiative. She has also worked for Germany's international broadcaster, Deutsche Welle and worked remotely on the island of Tanna, where she trained journalists and staff at the local community radio station.

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