Amateur Radio Companion

An Aussie all-in-one CD-ROM reference

By David Jones, VK4OF

Have you ever wanted to find a single data source, made for local Australian conditions pertinent to our licensing system, that had just about everything you could imagine? Something that could even take you from being an interested observer with an inkling you might want to become an amateur, all the way through to a full call, all in one little package?

And what if this was on just one CD... jam-packed with over 160 MB and 200 pages of data, well written, well presented, and with Internet links to help you along the way?

And what if you could have this little gem right now? What would you be prepared to pay for something that could almost replace your heavyweight handbooks, your Callbook, many ancillary text books, and that contained the ACA licence conditions booklets, teaching aids and sample exams? *(If that side of it is good, little wonder! Much of the resource material was written by technical guru Ron Bertrand, who writes our Technically Speaking material. Ed.)*

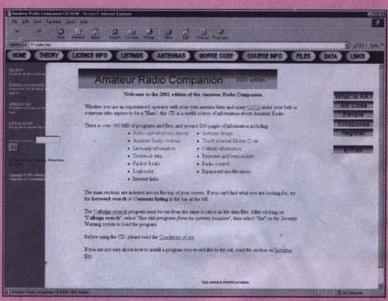How about only $22.95. Almost too good to be true, isn't it?

When Chris asked me to do a review of this new product, I noted it was "just" a CD-ROM. Heh... what the heck. I've seen one before. 5.25 inches across, hole in the middle stuff. Right? Well, yep, but what's on this is absolutely amazing. Michael Todd, VK6JMA and his team have assembled a brilliant collection of all the most useful material that we radio amateurs and SWLs need on a

day-to-day basis, and put it on a CD that is so inexpensive, it wouldn't be worth copying for your friends.

Let's have a look. It contains all the usual suspects... **Radio and Electronic Theory** and a major section about **antenna design** covering all the bands commonly in "home brew" use. In the areas of **education**, it has sections on Amateur Radio courses, linked to Ron Bertrand's material, plus a section called *Teach Yourself Morse Code*, together with all the licensing and licence specifications data necessary. It even has sample AOCP, NAOCP and Regulations papers prepared by Ron, with auto-results marking to let you know how you are progressing.

In its databases, it has whole sections devoted to the latest up-to-date **Repeater and Beacon Lists**, a full **Callbook** database (with Boolean search), plus a section on **Technical Data**. Then it gets serious.

There are literally *hundreds* of files and programs on specific matters, such as antennas, equipment modifications for many transceivers, advice on CW, techniques and programs for packet radio and radio control devices, station logbooks and Internet links to other places of interest.

It's all well presented in a package for $22.95 plus p&p. Want to know more? Send Michael an email to toddcomp@ bigpond.com. It's probably the best investment in AR you'll make this year, and at the price, you should be arrested for stealing. **R**