

*(a) the implications of this decision on the ABC's ability to create, produce and own its television content, particularly in the capital cities of Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth and Hobart;*

By cutting local production, the ABC will be taking an irreversible step which will cause the loss of skilled staff in each of the BAPH states. These skills have been acquired over many decades and can not simply be re-hired when needed. Previous local productions have not only demonstrated these skills but have given the public a unique feel of the ABC belonging to them. This rarely happens with outsourced programs made by commercial organisations.

Once the highly skilled staff have been made redundant and have moved on, the ABC will no longer be able to make programs which achieve this special link to the public. As a consequence the public will cease to regard the ABC as a public broadcaster and the ABC will lose its identity. After that they may well question the existence of the ABC and its use of taxpayers money.

In Hobart's case there is absolutely no question that the axing of local sport will severely reduce the size of the staff. It will mean the loss of the Outside Broadcasting facilities. ABC Hobart will then be unable to cover Anzac Day ceremonies, State Funerals or visiting national programs such as Q&A., not to mention any other events which need multi-camera coverage.

Even if the Outside Broadcast facilities are retained in Hobart (which requires the continuation of TSL football coverage) the loss of local production, such as Collectors, will cause a reduction in staff levels and make crewing any Outside Broadcasts extremely difficult.

*(b) the implications of this decision on Australian film and television production in general and potential impact on quality and diversity of programs;*

When programs are made by commercial companies, their main consideration is how well they rate with the public. The ratings system does not cater for minorities and if all programs are continued or axed according to how well they rate, then the only programs left will be the ones which appeal to the majority. With this system we guarantee a bland spectrum of dumbed-down programs and nothing for the more intelligent viewers. In other words the diversity we have now will disappear. This is exactly the direction the ABC is heading in.

Once Australian programs are sufficiently similar to foreign programs, we will not be able to compete on production costs and there will be less television made in Australia.

*(d) the implications of these cuts on content ownership and intellectual property;*

The argument that it is cheaper to make programs outside the ABC is weak. The truth is that outsourcing allows the ABC to tap into funding otherwise inaccessible to them. On the face of it, some would see that as a good thing. However that does not take account of the fact that the ABC will not generate the same revenue from these productions and will lose the rights to unlimited repeats enjoyed with in-house productions. The long term cost of needing to make more programs to fill the air time will be higher.

In-house programs actually cost a lot less than lavish external programs and claims to the contrary use smoke and mirrors to fudge the figures.

*(f) the future potential implications of these cuts on ABC television's capacity to broadcast state league football and rugby; and*

*(g) any other related matters.*

If the ABC in Hobart stops covering the Tasmanian State League matches and does not replace them with any other sports coverage this will be the end of all Outside Broadcasts in Hobart. The equipment needed for these broadcasts will be permanently removed and the staff capable of running it will lose their jobs. Not only will there be no possibility of local sports coverage in the future, but also there will be no capability to broadcast any events requiring multi-camera coverage.

The impact on local football will be profound, as seen in the past when the ABC switched to covering Hockey for a few years. The public exposure to the game will be lost and the competition may well cease.

With the loss of the Outside Broadcast facilities, the ABC will not be able to cover important events such as Anzac Day except in a minimal news broadcast later in the day.