

Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee
Radiocommunications Bills 2020 Inquiry
Response to Question on Notice
Special Broadcasting Service

Agency name: SBS

Hansard Ref: page 15

Senator Nita Green asked on 12 October 2020:

Senator GREEN: I want to go back a step. I was wondering whether the ABC and the SBS are impacted, if at all, by the decision not to progress the integration of the management of the broadcasting spectrum and what you thought a future time frame for this part of the reform should be.

Ms O'Neil: Sorry, we were just conferring amongst ourselves.

Mr Morton: I'm not that clear on the question, to be honest. My apologies.

Ms Eves: Can I confirm, Senator Green, that this was a proposal that was in the 2017 proposal for the review of the legislation that hasn't appeared in this version?

Senator GREEN: Correct.

Ms Eves: I'd have to take on notice that impact on us. We've been concentrating on this particular version of the bill.

Response:

The timeframe for any integration of the management of the broadcasting spectrum into a new Act is a matter for Government.

Any integration of broadcasting spectrum management into the general spectrum regulatory framework would need to ensure the rights of SBS as a national broadcaster are preserved, with no adverse changes which would impact the quality or quantity of SBS services or on the ability of SBS to determine how the spectrum allocated to it is used.

SBS has submitted that the importance of national broadcasting should be expressly recognised in the objects clause of the *Radiocommunications Legislation Amendment (Reform and Modernisation) Bill 2020*, which is the subject of this inquiry. This new object would guide spectrum management under the new Act as it impacts national broadcasters, assisting decision makers to mitigate the impact of any unintended consequences that may arise from maintaining a separate spectrum framework for broadcasting.