

SUBMISSION TO SENATE INQUIRY RE ABC PROGRAMMING DECISIONS

Virginia and Roger Stuart-Smith

1. *Arts programming*

We are very disappointed that the ABC is proposing to cut programming, particularly Arts programming, on both TV and radio. We are concerned that these cannot be replaced by online 'portals', which, whilst they may be a wonderful addition to the ABC range of offerings, would not replace cultural programs. Also programs like *New Inventors* are forums for generating new ideas and businesses. Such a program would not be able to exist on a commercial station unless it was converted into a 'reality' TV show with a competitive element (and probably some form of humiliation).

2. *Co-productions*

We are very concerned about any change that dumbs down the programs aired on or produced by the ABC. There is plenty of lightweight material on commercial stations. The handing over of control associated with co-productions and the loss of ownership of these productions is of great concern, as the ABC has its own mission to fulfill, which isn't necessarily in line with commercial operations (which often appeal only to the lowest common denominator). The new TV series called *Crownies* is an example of the more formulaic lightweight production that already detracts from the quality of the ABC.

3. *ABC's role*

We see the ABC as a place where the public has an opportunity to have access to programs of intellectual or artistic or cultural value that would not be shown on commercial stations.

We are disappointed that there has not been more opportunity for public debate about the direction the ABC management is planning to take.