

Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee
Inquiry into the National Broadcasting Legislation Amendment Bill 2010
Questions on Notice

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: National Broadcasting Legislation Amendment Bill 2010

Senator Fisher asked:

Will this Bill stop a Minister from ringing a person and offering them a job as an ABC Board Member? If so, where and how?

Answer:

Under the proposed legislative arrangements, new appointments to the Board cannot be made without first having the independent Nomination Panel conduct a merit-selection process with respect to those appointments.

The Minister (or the Prime Minister in the case of the Chair of the ABC) may recommend to the Governor-General that a person other than one nominated by the Nomination Panel to be appointed.

However, if the Government recommends an appointment that is not the same as the Nomination Panel's recommendation, the Prime Minister or the Minister must table the reasons for that appointment in each House of Parliament no later than 15 sitting days after the appointment is made.

The Bill also allows the Minister (or the Prime Minister in the case of the ABC Chair) to recommend the re-appointment of an existing Board member without going through a further merit selection process.

The Minister's, or the Prime Minister's, decision to re-appoint a person to a Board may be based on, but is not limited to, considerations such as the incumbent Director's performance. The re-appointment of a Board member would not be subject to the new merit-selection process as that process would have been undertaken prior to their initial Board appointment.