

*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;*

In a smaller state such as Tasmania the implications of this decision are dire.

In Tasmania the ABC is generally held in high regard throughout the entire community. ABC production staff in this small state are often well-known, and in many cases are seen as ambassadors for the corporation. The loss of ABC internal production work in Tasmania jeopardises maintaining the general goodwill towards the organisation and diminishes the whole ABC brand in the community.

The ABC is seeking joint funding partners, such as state screen bodies and large production companies to produce programs for the network. Unfortunately in this state our screen body, Screen Tasmania, is insufficiently funded to realistically be able to finance any serious ongoing production strand with the ABC. There are certainly no large production houses based here. Therefore ongoing joint funding for uniquely Tasmanian based content on the ABC is unlikely. So, without any internal ABC production made here, Tasmanian program content would virtually disappear from our ABC screens, affecting the local community greatly and the Australian population as a whole.

Tasmania has a limited pool of experienced television production and technical staff. Many of these people work at or for the ABC. Without ongoing ABC internal production work, many of these people would lose their positions. As a result most would be permanently lost from the industry, as there is insufficient other production work opportunities locally. It would be very difficult to recall this expertise down the track if these changes are deemed to be unsatisfactory and the ABC returns to a more balanced mix of internal and external program production.

If ABC Outside Broadcast coverage of local sport were to be lost, it would seriously jeopardise the retention of Tasmania's only Outside Broadcast van. Sports coverage provides the regular 'back-bone' of work for this facility. It essentially justifies the retention of a broadcast OB van in Tasmania. Such a facility is absolutely necessary in a state separated from the rest of the country by sea. The Bass Strait makes it economically unfeasible for any organisation to bring a similar truck to the state for one-off local program commitments. There are no other OB vans in the state, so hiring a similar facility is simply not possible.

The current ABC Tasmania OB Van has been used to produce the studio component for shows like *Collectors*. This program, and others like it, has relied on the Outside Broadcast van facility to be able to work in locations 'off base'. This would no longer be possible if OB sport coverage was cut and the OB facility removed.

Along with that would go the option of Tasmania hosting shows like Q&A, or covering ANZAC Day services and state elections, plus other Outside Broadcasts of significant public proceedings, such as state funerals, music concerts, and commemorative events (eg Port Arthur massacre memorial ceremony). These are vital to the local community and provide an important service to those who cannot personally attend these important occasions.

The further reduction to ABC internal production seriously threatens the efficiency of the ABC in Tasmania. In recent years its staff have become very multi-skilled, making them extremely versatile and adaptable. They have developed skills across various technical areas, allowing managers to keep employee numbers to a minimum, while still being able to offer all the broadcast facilities found in bigger centres like Sydney and Melbourne. Losing even a handful of staff because of these internal program cutbacks would result in the loss of multiple highly developed skills. Therefore the ABC in Tasmania would at best become less efficient and flexible, and at worst incapable of offering many production services or skills at all. This is not a good result for the taxpayers of Australia who ultimately fund the organisation and want to see it run well.

Finally, News and Current Affairs programs in Tasmania will also be affected, by these changes. Until now the ABC's News and Current Affairs department has benefited greatly from the ABC's highly skilled production staff also working on their programs. Techniques and skills honed on internal ABC productions have been applied to Current Affairs shows like *7.30*, *Landline*, *Q&A*, *Australian Story*, *Insiders*, etc. The result has been much better quality shows than would otherwise be possible compared with operators limited to experience in News work only.

It is also worth noting that ABC Tasmania's operational staff and internal production equipment is also often sought by emerging filmmakers and students for use on shooting local low (or no) budget short films. Without the local ABC and its production staff volunteering their services, and its equipment, the opportunity for young Tasmanians to access expert knowledge and use a variety of professional production gear would simply disappear.

Clearly these recent changes to ABC program funding and cutbacks in production will have a seriously detrimental effect on smaller ABC branches such as Tasmania and to the community at large. They simply must be changed to allow the ABC to continue to be able provide a full range internal production services right around the country now, and in to the future.

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