

September 8, 2011

Committee Secretary  
Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

**A Submission concerning:** *The decision by the television management of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) to significantly cut the number and amount of ABC-produced programs, jobs (including through forced redundancies) and potentially affect resources, as announced on 2 August 2011*

Dear Sir/ Madam,

I am an Australia citizen who having made a submission to the Mansfield Review in 1996 is concerned that we are again revisiting the same arguments in 2011.

As the Friends of the ABC (FABC) say and I endorse;

*I expect the ABC to be a producer of innovative quality programming in all areas.*

*I want:*

- \* the ABC to be less dependent on outsourced programming*
- \* the ABC to be funded and rebuilt so that it has strong specialist units to produce high levels of high quality and genuinely local in-house programming in all program genres on radio, TV and online*
- \* a public broadcaster that is focused on diversity and quality, not ratings*

This extract from a commentary by **Margaret Simons** on 27 January 2009 on Inside Story (Copyright © 2011 by Inside Story and contributors) indicates that again and again we are rehashing the same arguments every few years.

*“Yet twelve years ago when Bob Mansfield conducted his inquiry into the future of the ABC he received over 10,600 submissions – more than four times the current number. It was this convincing evidence of public affection and concern for Auntie that convinced Mansfield the organisation should continue as a broadly based public broadcaster rather than being recreated as an organisation addressing only those types of content that the commercial organisations couldn’t or wouldn’t provide”.*

I remain a committed ABC radio listener and TV watcher in 2011. In fact having moved from Victoria to Queensland in recent years I am more than ever convinced of the need for an appropriately funded ABC. The regionality of Queensland means that our access to a diverse range of discussion & information is somewhat limited. Just one example, **Art Nation** brings myself & my husband up to date. In Melbourne where we previously lived we could access exhibitions, local papers opened up discussion of new works, now we have to access that information via the ABC as no local commercial radio produces similar programs and local commercial television definitely does not have anything of this nature.

In the move to new technologies, the ABC has had to adapt and change, but it has been acknowledged in recent weeks that the late Ian Carroll as Director of Innovation since 2007 was pursuing a very productive path, for example, assisting in the move to digital television.

I am particularly concerned about the possibility of programs being outsourced to Endemol Proprietary Limited as their programs that I have seen appear to have few redeeming, educational or positive qualities.

It has to be recognised that the ABC sets the standard for commercial broadcasters – they are encouraged to raise their own programming standards.

Over the years the ABC has educated, trained so many professional broadcasters – in front of & behind the microphone. The competence of the Queensland ABC staff (radio & television) during the 2011 January floods & cyclone season was excellent – they informed, they were compassionate, and they advised & linked entire communities.

***I would like to suggest that members of the Committee come out to the regional areas of Australia. I would like them to reacquaint themselves with the role that the ABC plays in informing, educating and promoting our culture and Australian way of life.***