

Dear Secretary of the Senate Standing Committee on the Environment & Communications

Please accept this email as my submission to the Inquiry into the above Private Members Bill.

Unfortunately I only became aware of your Inquiry late last week so I will limit my submission firstly by strongly supporting the submission you will have received from the Numeralla & District Activities Incorporated. As the owner of a property 8km south of Numeralla on the Carlaminda Road I am very aware of the lack of ABC radio coverage in that region. I was present at my property in January 2013 during the Yarrabin Bushfire which we watched burn towards us but with no real knowledge of its intensity or behaviour as we had no local ABC radio reception (1602, 810) which presumably was broadcasting bulletins. There is also no mobile phone coverage at our property.

Secondly, I also own a property at Old Adaminaby and once again there is no reliable local ABC radio reception (1602, 810) in that region.

During my term as the Federal Member for Eden-Monaro from 1996 to 2007, the electorate of both the locations mentioned above, I made numerous representations to the ABC on behalf of constituents regarding poor radio coverage. There are many remote and rugged terrain regions throughout Eden-Monaro which have been the subject of numerous bushfires endangering nearby residents and their properties. But my representations fell on deaf ears particularly with respect to extending the coverage of channels 1602 and 810 on the AM band. As I recall channel 1602 does not have a particularly strong signal, in fact quite weak, but all attempts by many over many years have failed to convince the ABC to increase its strength and therefore coverage.

I agree with the proposals in the Bill to ensure rural and regional Australia has improved influence on the ABC's activities including adequate staff in the regions but none of those issues are relevant while substantial areas remain without adequate local ABC radio reception. This needs to be the first priority.

I would be pleased to provide any further information on these matters.

Kind Regards
Gary Nairn

The Hon. Gary Nairn AO

Chairman Northern Territory Planning Commission (NTPC)
Member NT Environment Protection Authority (NT EPA)
Chair Tasmanian Spatial Information Council (TASSIC)
Chairman Mulloon Institute for environment, farming & society
Immediate Past Chairman Spatial Industries Business Association (SIBA)
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