

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice

Additional Estimates Hearings February 2016

Communications Portfolio

Australian Communications and Media Authority

Question No: 13

Australian Communications and Media Authority

Hansard Ref: Pages 18-19, 09/02/2016

Topic: Local Content – Quality/Rip-and-Read

Senator McKenzie asked:

Senator McKENZIE: Okay. If not necessarily about the method of rip and read, what about the quality of the local content provided by regional broadcasters?

Ms McNeill: I do not have the statistic at hand, but my memory is that well in excess of 90 per cent, or around 90 per cent, of those that we surveyed were content with the level of local content to which they had access.

Senator McKENZIE: Let us be clear that, when we defined 'local content' in the discussion around the report, it included not only regional television broadcasters but also regional newspapers, commercial radio and the ABC.

Ms McNeill: And online. Indeed—

Senator McKENZIE: That was the bucket of things we were talking about.

Ms McNeill: it was an holistic inquiry into—

Senator McKENZIE: So, 90 per cent say, 'We're happy,' or 'Yes, when we garner our local content from the variety of sources available locally, we're happy.' But, if we narrowed that down to whether they are happy with the quality of their regional television broadcasting services in certain aspects and with the quality of, say, a WIN or a Prime evening news production, produced locally in a rip-and-read style, and held them both up as examples equally meeting the licence obligations around local content, I would argue that the community would have a very different view and I was wondering if you had any data to back that up.

Answer:

The ACMA does not collect information about either the use by broadcasters of 'rip-and-read' news services or community opinion about the types of news services provided.

The *Broadcasting Services (Additional Television Licence Condition) Notice 2014* requires affected commercial television broadcasters to ensure that the local content they broadcast in accordance with the licence condition 'directly relates' to the area. It does not specify how licensees are to procure such content.

The previous reporting requirements were based on points claimed as local content. The ACMA understands that some broadcasters accumulated points based on the broadcast of local news updates throughout the day, others accumulated points based on the broadcast of local bulletins and or a combination of both.