

Budget Estimates 2015-16
Communications Portfolio – 5 May 2016

Question No	Program: Division or Agency	Senator	Title	Question	Hansard Page & Hearing Date or In Writing
1.	1.1	Urquhart	nbn electorate briefs – old electorates	<p>Senator URQUHART: Hello, Dr Smith. I want to take you to the department's answer to question on notice No. 6 from the additional estimates 2015-16, which referred to the NBN electorate briefs. One hundred and fifty briefs have been delivered—I think we had to get them on a memory stick because they were too big—but they do not represent the current 150 electorates that have resulted from the recent redistribution. We have been provided with Charlton, Throsby and Fraser briefs, but those electorates no longer exist and have not done for some period of time, and we have not been given briefs for Whitlam, Fenner or Burt and the reports were generated on 6 April 2016. Can you tell me why there is that discrepancy between the time frame and the electorate briefs?</p> <p>Dr Smith: I will ask Richard Windeyer to respond to that question.</p> <p>Mr Windeyer: To be honest, I would have to take it on notice to confirm exactly what the reason is. I suspect at the time we were still in the process of uploading the most recent mapping data with the new electoral boundaries in it and so it was simply a case of that being the best mapping capacity we had at the point in time.</p> <p>Senator URQUHART: I understand the new electorates were actually gazetted on 25 February, and the reports were generated on 6 April. There is quite a bit of time in between, so I do not know why that has happened.</p> <p>Mr Windeyer: I understand that and, as I say, I will have to take it on notice to get some detail on exactly what the reason was. What I am saying is I suspect the reason may have been our update of our mapping tools and software to reflect the change that was gazetted prior.</p> <p>Senator URQUHART: But you do not know—so it was not a direction of a minister or anything to provide the incorrect briefs?</p> <p>Mr Windeyer: Not that I am aware, no.</p> <p>Senator URQUHART: Could you submit to the secretariat the NBN electorate briefs for Whitlam, Fenner and Burt as at the most recent date that they were generated by the end of the day?</p> <p>Mr Windeyer: We will have to take on notice whether we can get them generated in</p>	Page 71

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				that period of time. We can see whether that is possible.	
2.	1.1	Urquhart	nbn Electorate Briefs - Status	<p>Senator URQUHART: That's what I am asking for, so I appreciate that. What is the status of the rest of the briefs that we were given? Do they reflect the most recent electoral boundaries? I guess my question is: are they trustworthy?</p> <p>Mr Windeyer: They will be accurate as to the electoral boundary information that we had within our tools at that point in time.</p> <p>Senator URQUHART: So they may in fact not be correct?</p> <p>Mr Windeyer: I would have to take it on notice to check that, but they would have been accurate at that point in time against the information we were using.</p>	Page 71
3.	Australia Council	Bilyk	Project Grants	<p>Mr Grybowski: We have two announcements imminent. The February project grants round will be announced next week. That is \$11.2 million worth of project funding to individual artists, groups of individual artists and the small to medium sector for project funding. There were some terrific applications and very exciting results from that very competitive round. The \$11.2 million was more than we would normally anticipate, but the redirection of some funds back to the Australia Council in this current financial year enabled us to invest that \$11.2 million. Those announcements will be made next week.</p> <p>The other announcement is our four-year funding, which is the core program funding for the small to medium sector, which will be announced publicly on the 16th of this month. We will start to personally call all the applicants from Wednesday.</p> <p>Senator BILYK: Are you able to tell me how much money has gone to Tasmania with regard to those two programs?</p> <p>Mr Grybowski: I will take that question on notice.</p>	Page 75-76
4.	Australia Council	Bilyk	Program funding	<p>Senator BILYK: Before the 2015-16 budget how many cultural places was the Australia Council hoping to support?</p> <p>Mr Grybowski: We piloted that very successful program twice—once in partnership in North Queensland in Rockhampton and once in South Australia in Goolwa. They were different programs but they were a pilot of the concept which partnered with state and territory and indeed local governments for a long-term program to work with</p>	Page 78

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				<p>professional artists and the artists in that particular community.</p> <p>Senator BILYK: What percentage of funding will be devoted to literature in the coming financial year and how does this relate to previous years?</p> <p>Mr Grybowski: We have not determined the specific allocation per art form. We respond obviously to the applications that we receive. So I will take that question on notice.</p>	
5.	ABC	Xenophon	Fact Check – Politicians Complaints	<p>Senator XENOPHON: I am running out of time, so, on notice, can you advise how many politicians—without necessarily naming the politicians—state and federal, have complained about Fact Check to the ABC? Presumably there would have been the call to the former managing director, calls that you know have to be taken—</p> <p>Mr Millett: Some of them are formal; some of them are informal. But, yes, I can do my best to take that on notice.</p> <p>Senator XENOPHON: Include formal and informal complaints to get an idea of how many politicians have complained about Fact Check in that time. I also want to ask you: given that Fact Check is \$1 million out of the \$200 million news budget, has Fact Check been brought up at any stage in any negotiations with the government for the extra triennial funding that the government has committed to the ABC?</p>	Page 81
6.	ABC	Xenophon	Fact Check	<p>Senator XENOPHON: But it is fair to say that Fact Check has been brought up more often than other issues in terms of complaints by politicians about the ABC?</p> <p>Mr Millett: I would have to go back and look at the numbers, but there are other programs that have occasionally raised the ire of politicians, including <i>Q&A</i>, for example. I do not know the exact tally, but I will come back with the information on how many complaints have been made regarding that program.</p>	Page 82
7.	ABC	McKenzie	Staff – Rural/Remote	<p>Senator McKENZIE: On notice—for whatever worth that is at this estimates; and I will be asking this question again—what steps have been taken to assure particularly rural and regionally based staff that the ABC is not Sydney centric? I will refer you to page 5 of the interim report.</p>	Page 86
8.	ABC	McKenzie	Cannes Film Festival Product Costs	<p>Senator McKENZIE: How much product did the ABC purchase from the Cannes Film Festival?</p> <p>Mr Pendleton: I would have to take it on notice.</p>	Page 87–88

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				<p>Senator McKENZIE: Could you—in dollar terms and actual programs?</p> <p>Mr Pendleton: Yes.</p> <p>Senator McKENZIE: And I want the eyeballs that actually watched those. Five to 10—how much does that cost?</p> <p>Mr Pendleton: I would have to take it on notice. Let me take it on notice.</p>	
9.	ABC	Paterson	Cannes Film Festival Costs	<p>Senator PATERSON: What class of airfare did they fly on?</p> <p>Mr Pendleton: It varies. It was a mix of business, premium economy and economy.</p> <p>Senator McKENZIE: Could you provide a breakdown for us?</p> <p>Mr Pendleton: For the mix?</p> <p>Senator McKENZIE: Yes, and for the accommodation and entertainment costs. Ms Guthrie, given it is what, 150 grand for 10 people. That is at least a couple of rural and regional presenters in local radio that we value so much. How many people will the ABC be sending to Cannes this year?</p> <p>Ms Guthrie: I cannot tell you.</p> <p>Senator McKENZIE: On notice, because we will be asking this again, provide information about your plans—how many, who and what class of travel would they be on. That would be great.</p> <p>Mr Pendleton: The majority of people who would attend that conference are our commercial people who are selling our content at—</p> <p>Senator McKENZIE: Okay, so I want to know how much we sold. Hopefully, it is more than \$148,000.</p> <p>Mr Pendleton: Definitely more than that.</p>	Page 88
10.	ABC	Chair	Public interest immunity claim	<p>CHAIR: Our committee is now resuming after a short break for a private meeting. There are two things that I would like to raise. Firstly, Ms Guthrie and your officials, unfortunately I do not think you are going to make your seven o'clock flight tonight. I just thought it might be prudent to advise you. You might like to make some alternative arrangements. Also for Australia Post, for Mr Fahour, who was due to come on now, we understand that there is a nine o'clock flight to Melbourne. It might be prudent to have a look at alternative arrangements, but we expect you will be able to get</p>	Page 91-92

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				<p>home tonight. Minister, in relation to the previous line of inquiry to the ABC, can we clarify for the purpose of the committee the status of the public interest immunity claim. Were you or was the ABC making one? Can you clarify.</p> <p>Senator Fifield: No. I do not think the ABC was making a public interest immunity claim. I think the officers were speaking to the extent that they were able, taking into account considerations of board confidentiality. I think that the best approach would be if we took the question on notice.</p> <p>CHAIR: Okay. Thank you.</p> <p>Senator DASTYARI: I would be happy for that to be the course. There are two matters. I have a physical copy of the report now. This is the report that was referred to. We will table it. We can deal with that later. I am very conscious of time.</p> <p>...</p> <p>Senator DASTYARI: I understand. Senator Fifield, I am happy for these questions to be taken on notice. I am happy to come back to this matter perhaps at a later Senate estimates hearing. I would also like clarification over the ABC position, and I believe they should consider a policy position about to what extent they will—at a helicopter level—outline what matters the board does or does not deal with. If you could take on notice revisiting a policy decision, perhaps not going to the specifics but more broadly to give people confidence and avoid what has become a catch 22 situation, which is: 'It is a matter for the board, but we can't tell you what the board is dealing with.' Also, Senator Fifield, if you could take on notice further consideration of whether the best way of handling this is a public interest immunity claim. At the end of those answers to question on notice, perhaps a new committee can consider whether or not it is something the Senate committee chooses or does not choose to accept. In that light and in being completely reasonable, which I always am, I have a series of other questions about a series of different matters, but I note the next Senate estimates hearings later in the year; we will have plenty more time to go through them. As sign of good faith in Senator Reynolds, I will cede my time.</p>	
11.	ABC	Ludlam	CDN Costs	Senator LUDLAM: Thank you, that is useful to know. Maybe I could ask if you	Page 93

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				<p>could take this on notice: once you have assessed how you are going to make up that shortfall of \$10 million a year, if there is anything additional that you want to provide to us on notice I would appreciate it. I actually want to know what you are not going to do, since you are going to have to do that—\$10 million just disappears, and that is not nothing. What will cease happening because you need to spend that money?</p> <p>Mr Pendleton: At this stage there are no plans to cease anything.</p> <p>Senator LUDLAM: Anything it you can provide us with would be useful.</p>	
12.	ABC	Paterson	OneABC typeface	<p>Senator PATERSON: Welcome, Ms Guthrie. It is my first estimates too, so I hope you will go easy on me! I was going to ask the minister about why the ABC is exempt from the efficiency dividend, but, given the time constraints, I might save that for the party room. I will start, Ms Guthrie, on the OneABC typeface. I appreciate that this would have been a decision made by your predecessor, but I would still appreciate your view on it and perhaps your colleagues' insight into the decision-making about the typeface.</p> <p>For the benefit of the committee, for those who are not familiar with it, the designer of the typeface, Peter Lofgren, has described it by saying it gives:</p> <p>A sense of contrast that is simultaneously austere and rich. A true sense of inclusiveness that celebrates diversity and multiculturalism. And finally that special larrikin mentality that does not take itself too seriously—</p> <p>which is a very impressive feat for a humble font. My first question is: how much did the font cost to design?</p> <p>Ms Guthrie: I think that is a question I will have to take on notice. I do not have that figure at hand.</p> <p>Senator PATERSON: I am sure Mr Pendleton could assist.</p> <p>Mr Pendleton: I do not have an exact number, Senator. I would need to take it on notice. It is not a big number.</p> <p>Senator PATERSON: Even a vague estimate?</p> <p>Mr Pendleton: Sub-50.</p> <p>Senator PATERSON: Sub-\$50,000?</p> <p>Mr Pendleton: Yes. But I do not have the exact number.</p>	Page 95

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13.	2.1	Bilyk	Catalyst Funding announcements	<p>Senator BILYK: Going back to those announcements, have there been any individual announcements besides the two I have mentioned?</p> <p>Senator Fifield: There no doubt have been, but we will take that on notice. I do not have complete recall of all that I have individually announced, but there will have been individual announcements separate to me as well. We can take that on notice.</p>	Page 109
14.	1.1	Chair	Towers	<p>CHAIR: I have a couple of follow-up questions, including one I want to follow up on from the issue that Senator Back raised. Obviously, it is an extremely important issue not just for Western Australia but also the rest of Australia. In relation to bushfires and the criticality of having mobile phone access and also 3G or 4G, going back to Senator Back's question, you said there were extra points. Is it just extra points for the extended power that they have on the towers? Are there also extra points for blackspots that are actually in recognised bushfire prone areas?</p> <p>Mr Windeyer: I will just see if we have someone here who can answer that question. The details are in the guidelines. While there are extra points for the power component, there are not extra points for particular locations. So location wise there are not points</p>	Page 115
15.	nbn	Urquhart	FTTN vs FTTP	<p>Senator URQUHART: So there is work being done. Has nbn co done a cost-benefit analysis of fibre to the node versus fibre to the premises for the west coast?</p> <p>Mr Morrow: There is a standard bit of analysis that the team does to look at what technology is best for an area. The criteria that go into that are the topology, the current infrastructure—the copper and the HFC network, for example—and the potential revenues behind those services that we could offer. All of that gets thrown into an economic calculation and, from that, we will determine what is the best technology for that area. I am certain that that analysis was done for Queenstown relative, initially, to fibre to the prem and fibre to the node, and, when they found that there was not adequate fibre feed into the area, that is when it reverted over to the satellite solution.</p> <p>Senator URQUHART: So you understand that work has already been done?</p> <p>Mr Morrow: I am sure at a high level analysis was done, yes.</p> <p>Senator URQUHART: Are you able to get information to me about whether it was and what it is?</p> <p>Mr Morrow: I do not see why we would not be able to tell you again the high-level look at the number that we use. That is more or less the model that we apply to so</p>	Page 118-119

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				<p>many different areas.</p> <p>Senator URQUHART: Are these people who are staying up late at night and working behind the scenes for you able to send that to you this evening?</p> <p>Mr Morrow: No. There is so much complexity involved in looking at every area. We have a very sophisticated system that looks at what we can gather from databases and what we can gather from the maps that are available—</p> <p>Senator URQUHART: I misunderstood you, then, because I thought you said that it had already been done.</p> <p>Mr Morrow: It is a model that is built that would look at what the initial look is. Again, I can tell you that, because there was no fibre fed into the area, I am sure the analysis stopped. We can give you an idea of what was done. The few people who are working late to help us with the answers would not have that detail.</p> <p>Senator URQUHART: I will wait and see what happens in Queenstown.</p>	
16.	nbn	Conroy	Fixed Wireless	<p>Senator CONROY: Do you now think it is more than just Strachan, or just more areas around Strachan?</p> <p>Mr Ryan: Strachan is to get the fixed wireless.</p> <p>Senator CONROY: I thought Mr Morrow and Mr Rue said there was an increase in fixed wireless.</p> <p>Mr Rue: That is right.</p> <p>Senator CONROY: So is it just more around Strachan, or in a few other areas?</p> <p>Mr Ryan: I do not think it is around Strachan specifically. Other areas within the general vicinity are getting fixed wireless.</p> <p>Senator BACK: So not Zeehan, not Queenstown?</p> <p>Senator CONROY: I will not hold you to exactly where around the area it is, but could you take on notice where else is getting fixed wireless? That would be great.</p> <p>Mr Morrow: We can do that.</p>	Page 123