

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice

Budget Estimates May 2017

Communications Portfolio

Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Question No: 143

Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Hansard Ref: Written, 07/06/2017

Topic: Audio Description

Senator Urquhart, Anne asked:

1. Has the ABC allocated any funds for the provision of Audio Description services over the forward estimates?
2. In the February Estimates (Hansard reference Page 99 28/02/2017) Ms Guthrie representing the ABC stated that she would be able to provide a cost per hour calculated from the previous trials undertaken. Is that cost per hour now available? In yes, can you provide costings. If not, why not?
3. When will the ABC go to market for a permanent audio description service?
4. Is the ABC on track to finalise its media access strategy by 30th June 2017? Has the delivery of Audio Description services been addressed in the strategy?

Answer:

1. No. The ABC was provided with discrete funding by government to conduct temporary technical audio description trials. This funding was expended at the conclusion of the trials.
2. Based on the two trials it has conducted, the ABC has made an estimate of the initial capital expenditure required to establish a permanent audio description service as well as the ongoing annual operational costs for the service and has shared this with government.
However, the ABC has not gone to market for a permanent audio description service. Accordingly, the publication of this information would put the ABC at a commercial disadvantage and would not be in the public interest.
3. The ABC has no current plans to establish an audio description service.
4. The ABC expects to finalise its media access strategy in the third quarter of 2017. Audio description is a component of the strategy, identifying that the future provision of the service will be informed by the outcome of the audio description working group report to government.