

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**

**Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice**

**Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearings October 2015**

**Communications Portfolio**

**Special Broadcasting Service**

**Question No: 39**

**Special Broadcasting Service**

**Hansard Ref: Page 25, 20/10/2015**

**Topic: Traditional Marriage Advertisement - Clarification**

**Senator Canavan, Matthew asked:**

**Senator CANAVAN:** Mr Ebeid, I just want to follow up from the last estimates. There was an issue around an ad in favour of traditional marriage that the SBS refused to air during the gay Mardi Gras. Since that time, I believe you have corrected—at the time, you mentioned to this committee that channels 7 and 9 had pulled the ad. I believe those were the words that were used.

**Mr Ebeid:** I think we said at the time that we thought that they had rejected the ad.

**Senator CANAVAN:** No, I just reread the transcript here, Mr Ebeid. Just give me a second so we do not get things incorrect again. We had a discussion about it. I mentioned:

You ... may not be aware that Channel 7 and Channel 9 ran the ad ...

Then Ms Kellie said:

And subsequently banned it.

I said:

So, they did run it and choose to run it?

Ms Kellie said:

They subsequently pulled it.

They were the words that she used.

**Mr Ebeid:** And we have since corrected that.

**Senator CANAVAN:** Yes, I believe you have, and I am just trying to bring that up.

**Mr Ebeid:** I cannot remember which one did. One pulled it and one did not. I do not remember who.

**Senator CANAVAN:** In your answer you said your information was incorrect, and Channel 7 did air the advertisement. You said that Channel 9 decided not to air the ad. I actually do not believe that is true either. I do not want to go into great detail here, but could I ask you to look at that again.

**Mr Ebeid:** I am happy to. I think we did actually make contact with Channel 9 to come back with that—

**Senator CANAVAN:** I think the language there is very important. I believe that perhaps there might have been an issue with the booking on Channel 9. The language you have used there is 'decided not to air'. I do not know if that is fully correct, so, if you could look at that again, that would be appreciated.

**Mr Ebeid:** I am happy to.

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**Answer:**

SBS's information was based on the press release of 29 March 2015, by the Australian Marriage Forum (the Forum) which stated that Channel 9 had declined to air the advertisement. The release indicated that the advertisement was the second in the Forum's 'Think of the Child' campaign. SBS did not specifically contact the Forum or Channel 9 about this matter as it is not SBS's role to test the claims made in the media release or question decisions of other media organisations.

The advertisement which Channel 9 refused to air and which is referred to in the media release is similar to the first advertisement in the campaign, which SBS has previously answered questions in relation to.

SBS's previous comments concerning Channel 9 should have clarified that they pertained to the second advertisement and were informed by the Forum's media release.