

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice
Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearings October 2016
Communications Portfolio
Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Question No: 110

Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Hansard Ref: Pages 82-83, 18/10/2016

Topic: Sports Coverage

Senator DASTYARI, Sam asked:

Senator DASTYARI: I am very conscious of the time so I will race through this. I want to talk about women's sport. The Australian Sports Commission review, which I am sure you are aware of, found that seven per cent of non-news programming on TV was devoted to women's sport. That level remains unchanged since 2010, which is obviously a concern. I just want to turn to the ABC's coverage of women's sport. I understand you have a lot of competing interests and a lot of competing balances all competing for the same pool of money. I do note that in the past few years since 2014 that the ABC has pulled back on some of its sports coverage and my understanding is that since 2014, in the absorption of funding cuts—and you can call it what you want; decreases in future funding or whatever you want to call them, but I call them funding cuts—the ABC has pulled back on some of its sports coverage. Is that a matter of fact?

Ms Guthrie: That is true in relation to coverage of TV sports. Production of large sporting coverage is very expensive, as you know, as well as rights.

Senator DASTYARI: Yes, and in addition to that, as part of that, obviously the overall cut in sports coverage also resulted in a similar cut in women's sports coverage. Is that correct?

Ms Guthrie: I will have to take on notice the specifics around that but I can confirm that our live sports coverage on television has definitely decreased over the last few years.

Answer:

ABC TV coverage of both men's and women's sports has decreased in the last five years due to the relatively high costs of production. Women's sport coverage reduced with the cessation of broadcasts of the WNBL competition.

The only sports currently broadcast on ABC TV are women's competitions – in golf, the Women's Australian Open, and in football, the W League and nominated Matilda's matches played in Australia.