

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**

**Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice**

**Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearings November 2013**

**Communications Portfolio**

**Australian Broadcasting Corporation**

**Question No: 134**

**Program No. ABC**

**Hansard Ref: In Writing**

**Topic: Provision of equipment**

**Senator Ludwig asked:**

Is electronic equipment (such as ipad, laptop, wireless card, vasco token, blackberry, mobile phone (list type if relevant), thumb drive) provided to department/agency staff? If yes provide details of what is provided, the purchase cost, the ongoing cost and a breakdown of what staff and staff classification receives it.

**Answer:**

The ABC provides ABC staff who are on call or who work away from ABC offices with the necessary electronic equipment to efficiently and effectively undertake their duties. In providing staff with equipment to fulfil their duties away from ABC offices, the nature and needs of individual roles are taken into account and approved by senior management.

The ABC provides broadcasting services on a 24/7 basis. These services include the broadcasting of radio and television services and the provision of online services to a range of devices including smartphones and tablets. Much of this content is broadcast live to air. Twenty four hour operations necessitate the availability of senior and operational management out of hours and also away from ABC offices in order for editorial and operational decisions to be made in a timely fashion. Content making staff who regularly operate in the field and away from ABC locations may also be provided with the necessary equipment to collect, edit and sometimes upload the content back to an ABC system remotely.

Such equipment includes personal computers, mobile and smart phones, wireless cards or virtual private network tokens and a very small number of tablets, digital single lens reflex cameras and video cameras with ancillary equipment and other field recording equipment. The vast majority of staff provided with this equipment are multiplatform content makers working in regional areas as well as operational and senior managers.

Multiplatform content makers are provided with a portable kit including laptop computers, digital cameras, microphones, smartphones and ancillary equipment in order to be able to collect content, edit that content and upload it back to an ABC system remotely while away from an ABC office.

When it is required, staff in operational management roles are provided with laptop personal computers and/or smartphones in order to be able to access critical ABC business systems and communications while away from an ABC office. Some management staff also need to be able to access ABC content while away from the office in order for editorial decisions to be made in a timely fashion.

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Well established processes are in place across the Corporation to ensure that staff are held accountable for all equipment issued to them and that it is returned to the ABC when no longer required as part of their role. The acquisition of such equipment is based on business needs and the ABC follows Commonwealth procurement guidelines in sourcing equipment. In line with Commonwealth processes the cost of this equipment is the best available in the market.

The following table is a summary of the key types of equipment provided and the classification of staff assigned this equipment with some notes regarding the reason for the equipment allocation.

<b>Equipment (Cost from market as sourced following Commonwealth procurement guidelines)</b>	<b>Classification of Staff</b>	<b>Reasons for allocation of Equipment</b>
Audio Recorder	Content Makers	Audio field recording
Digital Single-Lenses Reflex Camera – some with Camera Lens, Battery Pack, Back Pack, AV Cable, Memory Disk	Content Makers	Capturing photographs and/or video in the field
Digital Audio Tape Recorder	Content Maker	Audio field recording
DVD player	Management	Content review and approval
External Hard Drive	Content Makers	Storage of audio and/or video content recorded in the field
Microphone	Content Makers	Audio field recording
Mobile phone / Smartphone	Content Makers; Operational and Senior Management	Audio field recording, editing and uploading; Out of office and out of hours communication
Personal computer (e.g., PCs, Laptops & MacBooks)	Content Makers; Operational Management	Editing and uploading audio and/or video content recorded in the field; Access to ABC business systems away from ABC locations; Content review and approval
Television	Content Maker; Operational Management	Content viewing or review and approval
Tablets (e.g., Apple iPad and Samsung)	Management	Content and documentation review and approval
Video Camera	Content Makers	Video Field Recording
Video recorder	Operational management	Content review and approval

The ABC does not monitor and report on the purchase of items below the threshold for minor items. This is currently set at \$2000. The ongoing cost of the electronic equipment will depend on the data plans, where applicable, and usage.