

**From:** N. Vahdat [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, 30 July 2001 11:38 PM  
**To:** ecita.sen@aph.gov.au  
**Subject:** email submission to the enquiry on ABC

Dr. N. Vahdat  
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30.7.01

Re: Submission to the Senate enquiry on the methods of appointment to the ABC board

Dear committee members:

In my submission I would like to state the following:

I find the current system of appointments to the ABC board highly dissatisfactory. I have no confidence in the present ABC board and feel that it has been stacked by the present government with people aligned with its own political philosophy. Both Mr. McDonald and Mr. Shier have proven over and over again that they are serving the interest of the government rather than that of the public at large.

The following are just two examples:

Mr. McDonald went so far as publicly promoting the Prime Minister prior to the last election and Mr. Shier tried to stop the recent Four Corners program which had investigated the extent to which the Liberal Party had gone in an attempt to find dirt against Paul Keating.

The board has neither protested against the funding cuts to the ABC nor against the attacks on ABC's independence by the government.

By asking funds for specific purpose they have allowed the government to determine what the ABC should or should not do. Some of the very good programs have been axed. An example being Media Watch which has been critical of Mr. Shier and Mr. McDonald among others.

There is also the danger of commercialisation via the back door. As a result many talented people have left the organization. Our ABC is no longer the same.

It is absolutely necessary to have a totally unbiased process of choosing the ABC board members and managing director. This would protect the organization from any government stacking it with its own cronies, now or any time in the future. Independence of the ABC lies at the very foundation of our democratic system. The board must serve the public at large and not the government of the day.

I hope that your work will lead to real change in this very important process, safeguarding our most important democratic institution.

Yours truly,

N. Vahdat