

**From:** Angela Munro [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, 6 August 2001 6:28 PM  
**To:** ecita.sen@aph.gov.au  
**Subject:** Senate Inquiry on ABC Board Appointments

25A Farnsworth St  
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August 6, 2001

Secretary  
Senate Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts References  
C'ee,  
S157 Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam

I wish to convey my concern at the huge loss of core operational funding, of senior creative and managerial staff and of valued programs from Australia's most important cultural institution. This has been accomplished, I believe, by the executive government control of the Board of the ABC, notably through its chairman and other high profile political appointees. Neither major party is immune from serious charges of political interference, critique of government practice being unacceptable to both.

Hence the importance of transparency and merit as dual principles in the appointment of the Board and, as a result, the Managing Director of the ABC. It is patently obvious that neither has public support and trust, and is actively partisan.

There needs to be demonstrable experience in and commitment to independent, public broadcasting as a pre-requisite to board appointment. Appointment on the basis of a mix of explicit criteria/categories, including consumer representation, and subject to all-party review, would curb abuse of power both in appointments and continuing functioning of an independent board.

At a well-attended public meeting of concern as to the independence of the ABC from political and commercial influence, in Castlemaine on 14th June, the major issue raised was that of the puppet status of the board and the urgent need to reclaim legitimacy.

I trust that examination of 'best practice' in Northern European countries may assist such reform.

Yours sincerely

Angela Munro