

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**

**Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice**

**Budget Estimates May 2017**

**Communications Portfolio**

**The Australian Communications and Media Authority**

**Question No: 171**

**The Australian Communications and Media Authority**

**Hansard Ref: Written, 06/06/2017**

**Topic: Dropping of Children's content**

**Senator Hanson-Young, Sarah asked:**

1. What effect would entirely dropping the requirements for commercial broadcasters to make any children's content at all do to the children's television industry?
2. How many jobs would be lost if those requirements were dropped entirely?
3. Has there been any attempt to ascertain how many hours of children's television would be created by the commercial broadcasters if it was left up to them?
4. What do Australian children gain from seeing Australian content on their tvs?
5. Is it possible that content requirements could be increased?

**Answer:**

The Explanatory Memorandum to the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* (the BSA) indicates that the Children's Television Standards 2009 (CTS) were originally made to ensure that children have access to a range of quality television programs made specifically for them, including Australian drama and non-drama programs, and to protect children from the possible harmful effects of television. Compliance by commercial broadcasters with the CTS is administered by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA).

On 6 May 2017 the Australian Government announced that it is undertaking a comprehensive review of Australian and children's screen content (the Review). The Review is being conducted jointly by the Department of Communications and the Arts, the ACMA and Screen Australia. The objective of the Review is to provide policy options to government on the most effective support mechanisms for the Australian screen production sector. Specifically, mechanisms to support Australian drama, documentary and children's content and the Australian Screen Production Incentive will be reviewed.

It is expected that the Review output/s will canvass substantive elements of the matters flagged in questions 1-5 above. Accordingly, it would be inappropriate for the ACMA to respond to these questions at this time.