



Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee  
Budget Estimates 2021-22  
Friday, 7 June 2021  
Daily summary

Here is the summary of today's proceedings in the Environment and Communications Legislation Committee estimates hearing.

The committee met from 9.03am until 12.15pm.

The committee examined the communications outcomes of the Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications portfolio, including the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC).

Some of the topics discussed by the committee included:

- questions in relation to the mediation of the defamation case involving Mr Christian Porter and the ABC;
- overall cost to the ABC of defending the defamation case;
- suppression order still currently before the court in relation to the unpublished schedules of the ABC's defence documents and the redacted portions of Mr Porter's reply;
- ABC's article which was in question in the defamation case, which remains published online, and the addition of an editor's note;
- online commentary regarding the reported settlement;
- confidentiality of the terms of settlement and contradictions in disclosures of legal costs by parliamentarians;
- timing of the media statement announcing settlement of the matter;
- ABC's approach to employee's personal social media accounts;
- what constitutes a sackable offence for senior employees, including the case of the former legal representative, Mr Sebastien Maury;
- independence and performance of the ABC Chair, Ms Ita Buttrose;
- review process and application of standards in relation to the Four Corners program; and
- Triennial funding cycle and implications for fulfilling the ABC Charter.