

Subject: Submission to Senate inquiry into recent ABC programming decisions
Date: Saturday, 10 September 2011

Dear Senators

I urge the members of the Senate Inquiry to consider carefully recent ABC management decisions with regard to outsourcing the production of arts-related programs.

While there are some agencies able to produce quality programs in the short term, these agencies are not secure, nor do they have a binding commitment to continue these productions. They are commercial outfits, and must respond to market forces. If the ABC disbands its production houses, these staff and resources will, at best, be dispersed throughout these companies, resulting in dilution of talent and experience.

In fact, no other media producer has the commitment (as per the ABC's Charter) or resources to produce high quality programs in the long-term for diverse Australian audiences, especially those not served by mainstream commercial media. The ABC has a duty to provide programs that 'reflect the cultural diversity of the Australian community' (ABC Charter).

Australia is a tiny player in this global media world. It will not be possible for Australia to continue to provide high quality arts programs without significant government financial and policy support, and without dedicated units resourced by experienced and skilled staff.

Already Australia's print media is more concentrated than ever before, with these same commercial corporations also delivering radio and television programs to mainstream Australian audiences. This situation ultimately threatens democracy.

The ABC is our public broadcaster, dedicated 'to providing programs that contribute to a sense of national identity'. Please help us to keep it.

Yours truly

Jan Lyttle