

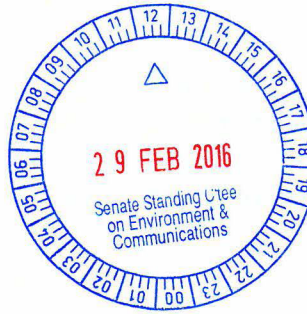
HON PETER MALINAUSKAS MLC



**Government
of South Australia**

Minister for Police
Minister for Correctional Services
Minister for Emergency Services
Minister for Road Safety

MES15D0394



GPO Box 668
ADELAIDE SA 5001

Senator Linda Reynolds CSC
Chair
Environment and Communications Legislation Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Senator Reynolds

Thank you for your letter dated 14 December 2015 to the Hon Tony Piccolo MP, former Minister for Emergency Services, regarding the inquiry into the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation Amendment Bill 2015* (the Bill).

The emergency service sector relies heavily on ABC local radio for emergency broadcasts, particularly in regional and rural areas of South Australia. While the South Australian Country Fire Service has a Memorandum of Understanding with several radio stations, including FM stations which are part of the Commercial Network Australia group, their decision to broadcast our emergency messages is at their discretion. As such, the obligation of ABC local radio to broadcast our emergency messages is of significant importance for community safety. Any changes as a result of the Bill that impact resourcing and the ability to broadcast such messages would be detrimental. Alternatively, any developments that ensure regional stations are staffed appropriately during natural disasters/emergencies so that production can support community safety would be welcome.

I have also sought comment on the Bill from the Hon Geoff Brock MP, the South Australian Minister for Regional Development. Minister Brock has noted the provision for the establishment of a Rural and Regional Advisory Council to advise the ABC Board, and has suggested that one member be required from rural or regional South Australia, in recognition of the communities in this State which are reliant on the ABC for local broadcast services.

The Minister also noted that the Commonwealth should be commended for including the provision that the ABC Board must consult with regional employee stakeholders and its Council before implementing any policy affecting regional areas; and for recognising that the ABC must make greater per capita investment and have a greater proportion of employees in rural and regional areas of Australia than population density and commercial aims would otherwise dictate.



For clarification regarding these issues please contact my Ministerial Adviser,
Ms Josephine Wilkins on 8463 6624.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Hon Peter Malinauskas MLC
Minister for Emergency Services

21/2 / 2016

cc: Hon Geoff Brock MP, Minister for Regional Development
Mr Malcolm Jackman, Chief Executive, SA Fire and Emergency Services Commission
Mr Greg Nettleton, Chief Officer, South Australian Country Fire Service