

It is with a heavy heart that I write to the Senate Standing Committees for Environment and Communications, regarding the recent (and further proposed) cuts to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC).

My family only got a television when I was aged 6, as we moved overseas for my father's work – living in a country where ABC was the only source of news from home. As a result, I grew up watching and listening to quality ABC programs and I am a richer Australian for it.

For my submission, I refer to the Terms of Reference for the Senate Inquiry – reference (f) the future potential implications of these cuts on ABC television's capacity to broadcast state league football and rugby.

As sport-loving Australians, my partner and I watch both the state league football and rugby, and have done so for many years. Screening local sport on ABC shows a commitment to regional Australia that commercial channels simply ignore. Abandoning local sport means ABC abandons the broadcaster's very function and purpose. I hope the ABC will re-consider and commitment to broadcast local sport.

Secondly, I refer to reference (b) the implications of this decision on Australian film and television production in general and potential impact on quality and diversity of programs.

The ABC, proudly independent, is the only production company that can provide Australians with quality programs that are diverse and with integrity (and affordable to all Australians – free!) Any cuts will impact on ABC's integrity and this will have significant consequences.

As a young Australian who has lived abroad in countries where ABC is the only source of news from home, the importance of ABC maintaining quality shows (such as Arts Nation and The New Inventors) is apparent. It reminds young Australians of our deeply unique culture and creativity.

It is this point I wish to make – young Australians, unable to make a submission to this Standing Committee, will be most greatly impacted by the recent (and proposed) cuts to ABC. As we erode away at the very purpose and charter of the ABC, it will be the next generation that will be poorer for it.

I hope the Senate Standing Committee will take my comments into consideration.