



Mr Stephen Palethorpe  
Environment and Communications References Committee Secretary  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

9<sup>th</sup> September 2011

Dear Mr Palethorpe,

### **Inquiry into recent ABC programming decisions**

On behalf of AFL Tasmania, I wish to make the following submission to the Environment and Communications Reference Committee in relation to the inquiry into ABC programming decisions.

The recent speculation regarding the future potential implications of these cuts on ABC television's capacity to broadcast state league football in SA, WA, Victoria and Tasmania, as well as rugby codes in Queensland and NSW is extremely concerning.

AFL Tasmania is the sole, independent governing body for Australian Football in Tasmania. AFL Tasmania manages and administers Tasmania's only whole-of-state football competition; the Tasmanian State League (TSL) comprised of 10 member clubs.

The broadcasting of TSL matches is a key component of AFL Tasmania's commitment to growing our game and ensuring that local football is positioned as a respected, valued and leading community stakeholder in all areas of Tasmania from the furthest North West Coast communities to the smallest southern towns.

Australian Football is an important part of Tasmania's social and cultural identity, and is by far Tasmania's most popular sport; approximately 80% of all Tasmanians are AFL/Australian Football fans and around 100,000 Tasmanians actively participate in local football throughout the state every week during the football season.



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The ABC has been televising community football/sport in Tasmania for the past 30 years and has become a fundamental part of Saturday afternoon television for a substantial portion of the community. AFL Tasmania believes the broadcasts are essential to the future success and growth of the TSL as well as for the growth of the game below the State League. The implications of the axing of internally produced programming would be devastating for participation in football at all levels of the game and in all communities throughout the state and would impact AFL Tasmania, local clubs, and the community both socially and economically.

It is extremely unlikely the TSL competition would be able to secure a commercial or community broadcast partner equal to the current arrangement with the ABC should programming be cut. AFL Tasmania remains committed to its ongoing investment in the ABC and hopes to continue its relationship with the ABC into the future.

Yours sincerely,

Scott Wade  
Chief Executive



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