

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**

**Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice**

**Additional Estimates Spill-over hearing March 2017**

**Communications Portfolio**

**Australian Broadcasting Corporation**

**Question No: 334**

**Australian Broadcasting Corporation**

**Hansard Ref: Written, 03/04/2017**

**Topic: ABC RN**

**Senator Bilyk, Catryna asked:**

1. What assurances can the Minister give to musicians, technicians and orchestras that there will be no further cuts to music programs on ABC radio services, especially RN and Classic FM?
2. What steps is the Minister taking to ensure that the ABC adheres to its Service Level Agreements with the major symphony orchestras to provide an agreed number of recorded and broadcast performances in each year?
3. What reductions have there been since 2014 in the number of music programs on ABC radio and the number of broadcast performances on Classic FM?
4. What reductions have there been since 2014 in the number of recordings made and released by Classic FM?

**Answer:**

1. The Government has no role in ABC programming decisions. The ABC has legislative independence in regard to programming matters, including the amount of music programs broadcast on the ABC's radio services.
2. Whilst independent, the ABC is accountable to Parliament through annual reports, corporate plans, financial and performance audits and appearances before parliamentary committees.
3. Since 2014, ABC Radio has increased its total number of music programs, with the introduction of Double J as a full-time radio service adding more than 12 new programs and ABC Local Radio also introducing two new music programs. Since 2014, ABC RN has decommissioned four music programs.

Since 2014, Classic FM has recorded and broadcast approximately 300 performances per year.

4. In 2014, Classic FM reduced its number of live recordings from approximately 600 to approximately 300 each year.
  - a. This is because of the 600 recordings being made, up to 50% were not broadcast due to a lack of available airtime. Now that this number has been reduced, every recording that Classic FM makes is scheduled for broadcast.
  - b. There are no immediate plans to change the number of live recordings by the ABC. 300 have been planned for 2017, as per previous years.