

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice

Additional Estimates Hearings February 2017

Communications Portfolio

Special Broadcasting Service

Question No: 54

Special Broadcasting Service Corporation

Hansard Ref: Page 34, 28/02/2017

Topic: SBS access to Security Agencies

Senator Dastyari, Sam asked:

Senator DASTYARI: We do not even have it; you have not introduced it again. Minister, I want to draw your attention to a matter regarding SBS that we discussed at the Senate estimates about two years ago, I believe. This was prior to your time as minister. I believe the minister at the table may have been Senator Fierrevanti-Wells, but I could be wrong about that. It was regarding SBS being given access to or having a better partnership with the security agencies in terms of how it does the deradicalisation work. Minister, I was wondering if you were aware of any of these kinds of conversations. I understand the security agencies do an amazing job. It just struck me as a little bit odd when you have a public broadcaster which has the ability to target certain communities very effectively and has the resources to be able to target these groups effectively kind of being in a silo of government away from the security agencies. I do not think there is ill intent; I think it just how government sometimes works. I was wondering if you can take that on notice and provide a few words on it.

Senator Fifield: I will take it on notice. I will see if Mr Ebeid wants to add something or if he wants to take it on notice too.

Answer:

SBS would welcome the opportunity to meet with security agencies on the issue of social cohesion and deradicalisation, and would welcome introductions to relevant officials in government or agencies.

SBS has a proud history of producing content to support social cohesion. SBS also works with various partners to deliver community service announcements encouraging social cohesion. Strong social cohesion is good for Australia in many ways, but importantly it is a valuable protection against radicalisation.