

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice
Additional Estimates February 2017
Communications Portfolio
Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Question No: 94

Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Hansard Ref: Page 84, 28/02/2017

Topic: Shortwave consultation - Pacific

Senator Moore, Claire asked:

Senator MOORE: I have a couple of questions about the impact on the Pacific, which has not been picked up to now. I do not know, Managing Director, how many people did write to you about the Pacific, but I did, on 12 December, as soon as it happened, and I have not had a response yet. I am waiting for that response. I have a copy of my letter.

Ms Guthrie: I have not seen that letter—

Senator MOORE: I know that there have been meetings arranged to do briefings around the issues in the Northern Territory, but I have not heard much really about the issues in the Pacific. A number of concerns have been raised with me and also, I believe, with DFAT, about the consultation process and what happened there. Regarding the decision in the Pacific, what was the consultation process about the impact of the decision for that area?

Ms Guthrie: We definitely consulted with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and with—

Senator MOORE: When did you do that?

Ms Guthrie: I will have to take that on notice. We also consulted with the various partners throughout the Pacific. Again I can take on notice the matter of the specific consultations in advance of that.

Answer:

The ABC has briefed the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) on its plans regarding its international radio services over a number of years. This included plans to cease the Asia shortwave services in early 2016 as well as the Pacific services in early 2017.

The ABC spoke with DFAT regarding planned cessation of the Pacific shortwave services in August and November 2016 and was also in contact with the DFAT Deputy Head of Mission to Papua New Guinea in October 2016 regarding the decision to terminate the services.