

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice

Budget Estimates Hearings May 2015

Communications Portfolio

Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Question No: 137 (b)

Program No. Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Hansard Ref: Written, 17/6//2015

Topic: Non-Australian Citizens Employed by the Department/Agency

Senator Ludwig, Joe asked:

1. What is the Department/Agency's policy with regard to hiring non-Australian citizens?
2. Does the agency have a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) policy? If yes, please provide a summary.
3. How does the Department/Agency determine whether a person is a non-Australian citizen?
4. How many staff who were not Australian Citizens have been hired by the Department/Agency since the Federal Election in September, 2013? Please break the numbers down by:
 - a. Levels at which they are employed
 - b. Immigration Status (Visa)
 - c. Cultural Background
 - d. Linguistic Background
 - e. How many were hired to satisfy CALD targets?

Answer:

1. The ABC's policy with regard to employing non-Australian citizens in Australia is that they must be either
 - Permanent residents;
 - New Zealand citizens in Australia on a valid passport; or
 - Visitors to Australia with a valid work visa for the duration of the entire period of employment.
2. The ABC has recently introduced a Cultural Diversity Plan 2015-2016 designed to help meet
 - The ABC's strategic objectives for 2015 including commitments to "embrace diversity and offer content of both broad appeal and of a specialist nature", as well as to "represent, connect and engage communities" and to "encourage a culture of creativity, diversity, innovation, agility and engagement".
 - The ABC's Charter requiring the broadcast of programs that contribute to a sense of national identity and reflect the cultural diversity of the Australian community. It also requires the Corporation to take account of the multicultural character of the Australian community.
 - The ABC' Equity and Diversity Plan which promotes being inclusive, audience focused and audience accessible.

In order to reflect and engage the broad Australian audience the Plan requires the ABC to seek to identify and implement strategies to:

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- increase cultural diversity in leadership and senior executive positions;
 - increase diversity in content, programs and services;
 - broaden reporting perspectives;
 - diversify on-air and on-line content makers, presenters, contributors and participants;
 - and
 - communicate broadly the cultural diversity activities of the ABC.
3. To determine a person's citizenship and whether or not they are eligible to work in Australia, they are required to provide one or more of the following original documents:
- Australian Birth Certificate
 - Certificate of Australian Citizenship
 - Australian or New Zealand Passport
 - Evidence of permanent resident status
 - Temporary work visa

The ABC has engaged an immigration agent to check with the Department of Immigration and Border Protection the visa status working rights of non-Australian citizens prior to hiring. This agent also coordinates the ABC's special business sponsorship arrangements including managing 457 visa sponsorship applications.

4. The ABC does not keep a central register of employees who are not Australian citizens, other than those who have been employed under special business sponsorship arrangements. Of the latter there have been two people hired since the Federal Election in September 2013. This number is too small to break down into the groups requested without disclosing personal/sensitive information. Neither employee was hired to satisfy any targets.