

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**

**Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice**

**Budget Estimates May 2017**

**Communications Portfolio**

**Australian Broadcasting Corporation**

**Question No: 108**

**Australian Broadcasting Corporation**

**Hansard Ref: Page 117, 24/05/2017**

**Topic: Indigenous hiring policy**

**Senator Roberts, Malcolm asked:**

**Senator HANSON:** So, if someone defines and classifies themselves and says, 'I'm an Aboriginal,' they can apply for the job?

**Ms Guthrie:** That is correct.

**Senator HANSON:** Thank you. I just wanted to know that.

**Senator ROBERTS:** Can I request a copy of the guidelines.

**CHAIR:** You can certainly ask that.

**Senator ROBERTS:** On notice?

**CHAIR:** You have just asked for it.

**Ms Guthrie:** Let me supply the details around our Indigenous hiring policy.

**CHAIR:** On notice?

**Ms Guthrie:** On notice.

**CHAIR:** That would be much appreciated. Thank you.

**Answer:**

The ABC's guidelines on Indigenous employment have been formed in response to the Corporation's legal requirements as a Commonwealth statutory authority as well as the Corporation's commitment as a public broadcaster to appropriately reflect the cultural diversity of the Australian community. These legal requirements and ABC guidelines are set out below.

**Legal requirements**

The ABC is subject to the *Equal Employment Opportunity (Commonwealth Authorities) Act 1987* (the EEO Act). Part 2 of the EEO Act requires Commonwealth Authorities to promote, develop and implement an equal employment opportunity program for '*persons in designated groups*', defined in the Act to include members of the Aboriginal race of Australia or persons who are descendants of indigenous inhabitants of the Torres Strait Islanders.

The ABC is also subject to a range of State, Territory and Federal legislation which prohibits it from discriminating against people in the area of employment on a broad range of grounds, including racial discrimination. The *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth), provides for special measures to be put in place by an employer for the purpose of securing the adequate advancement of certain racial or ethnic groups in order to give them equal rights and freedoms with other groups. Similar exceptions are found in State and Territory anti-discrimination legislation.

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**ABC Indigenous employment guidelines**

The ABC's Indigenous employment processes act in accordance with the Corporation's obligations under the EEO Act, and Federal, State and Territory EEO and anti-discrimination legislation. These employment processes also serve to meet the ABC's Reconciliation Action Plan (<http://about.abc.net.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/ABCRAPReport20162018.pdf>). This plan acknowledges the distinctive contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures and perspectives to Australian society. The plan also supports the Corporation's obligations under the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation Act (1983)* to reflect the cultural diversity of the Australian community.

Through the current Reconciliation Action Plan the ABC has committed to increase Indigenous employment to 3 per cent by 2018. This is in alignment with the Australian Public Service commitment that all Commonwealth public sector bodies meet an Indigenous employment target of 3 per cent by 2018.

Consistent with this alignment of employment targets, the ABC's Indigenous employment processes are also guided by the Australian Public Service protocols on Indigenous employment - <http://www.apsc.gov.au/managing-in-the-aps/indigenous/identified-positions>.