

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice

Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearings November 2014

Communications Portfolio

Special Broadcasting Service

Question No: 467

Program No. Special Broadcasting Service

Hansard Ref: Hansard Page 96, 20 November 2014

Topic: Tour de France

Senator Ludlam asked:

Mr Khalil: No, I am not saying that at all. If you are doing advertising during a World Cup game for example, and if this passed—this is purely hypothetical—you may have an additional couple of minutes during the break that you could actually fit it. I would suspect that you would not put in in the middle of the game, especially if Tim Cahill is about to score a goal. You would not want to miss that, nor would you want the Australian public to miss that.

Senator LUDLAM: You do not always get that much warning. You would not necessarily know if you scheduled advertising for that time.

Mr Khalil: I can tell you that I am pretty sure, and I think most broadcasters would probably say this as well, that they would never put advertising on in the middle of a sporting contest.

Senator LUDLAM: What about something like the Tour de France?

Mr Khalil: Again, I would have to take that on notice. It is a different type of sporting contest obviously. How you go about putting advertising in which part of the program is a matter for the director of sports and the director of sales and all the executives to work out.

Senator LUDLAM: How many hours does SBS on an average run the Tour de France in total?

Mr Khalil: I would have to take that on notice. I know it goes on a fair chunk of the night. It is one of the unusual ones. I did mention earlier 3 am, but maybe we could take a couple of minutes from there, but that would be counter-intuitive to that I guess because it is on in the middle of the night.

Senator LUDLAM: If you are in the spirit of taking things on notice, I would be interested to know that for property like that one in particular, the Tour de France, which is a bit unusual, how many minutes of these races will people lose because you will have staked out additional advertising?

Mr Khalil: That is a fair question. As I said to you, Senator, it is really hard to give answers on this, and we will take this on notice, because it is hypothetical. This proposal has not even passed and changed the act yet, so we do not know. But we will do our best on what we currently do with the Tour de France.

Answers

SBS ensures that program breaks for advertising spots do not interrupt viewer experience. SBS applies particular considerations for sport, including long continuous events like the Tour de France, to ensure viewers do not miss any significant action. SBS will continue to apply these considerations, regardless of the permitted amount of advertising per hour.

It is not possible to determine how many minutes of the race would be ‘lost’ (if any). Any additional advertising would be consistent with the quality programming approach undertaken to date.