

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**  
**Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice**  
**Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearings November 2014**  
**Communications Portfolio**  
**Australian Broadcasting Corporation**

**Question No: 546**

**Program No. Australian Broadcasting Corporation**

**Hansard Ref: Page 131 (20/11/14)**

**Topic: Local Radio**

**Senator McKenzie asked:**

**Senator McKENZIE:** Yes. How much of that budget goes to local radio?

**Mr Scott:** I would have to check that.

**Senator McKENZIE:** I am sure David would know.

**Mr Pendleton:** It sits within three budgets. Local radio or our local presence is made up of the local radio guys, but there is also a news presence within those budgets, so I do not actually have the numbers here for local.

**Senator McKENZIE:** Could you get that for me on notice?

**Mr Pendleton:** Yes.

**Senator McKENZIE:** Has this amount increased over time?

**Mr Pendleton:** No, I would think the amount has remained static.

**Senator McKENZIE:** Static?

**Mr Pendleton:** Over what time?

**Senator McKENZIE:** Over past budgets.

**Mr Scott:** Yes, it has increased through the injection of programs. The NII funding put staff in through local radio; and ABC Open has put staff in regional radio stations, which has increased the staffing level for providing services to local radio communities.

**Senator McKENZIE:** Could you give me figures on how that has increased? Do we still have 501 staff employed at regional, local radio?

**Mr Scott:** I will have to check that; I do not have the latest figures on me.

**Answer:**

The ABC's Local Radio budget for 2014/15 is approximately \$66 million and covers metropolitan Local Radio stations, Radio Sport and Rural Radio. This amount has increased over time. In 2002, the ABC received additional funding to expand regional services through National Interest Initiatives (NII), and, again, in 2009 to establish ABC Open.

In regards to staffing, information about full-time equivalent (FTE) staff in regional Australia was provided by the ABC in response to Question on Notice 211 from Senator Urquhart following the Additional Senate Estimates hearing in February 2014. At that time, there was 375 FTE staff in regional locations employed by Radio and News across the country. As at 14 December 2014, this figure was 398 (if part time and active casual staff are included, this number increases to 489 staff).