

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice

Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearings 2015

Communications Portfolio

Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Question No: 164

Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Hansard Ref: Page 24, 30/11/2015

Topic: Reporting – Proportion of the ABC budget spent on the provision of local radio to regional Australia

Senator McKenzie, Bridget asked:

Senator McKENZIE: Thank you, Mr Scott. I would love to get more detail on notice. On notice also, what proportion of the ABC budget is spent on the provision of local radio to regional Australia? What is the potential impact on emergency broadcasting in the event of bushfires, floods et cetera of the loss of local knowledge and local staff and the changed times to broadcasting?

Answer:

ABC Regional's operating budget for 2015-16 is \$51.6 million and covers approximately 424 full time employees and the associated costs for providing regional local radio services as well as some national content and programs. However, taking into consideration the costs across the organisation for content, transmission costs and other support spending, the true investment in serving regional and rural Australia is closer to \$390 million, which is approximately 36 per cent of the ABC's budget.

The ABC Regional schedule and radio bulletin changes announced in late 2015 will have no impact on emergency broadcasting. The ABC will continue to cover emergencies in the same way it always has at a local level.