

The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

Above Board?

Methods of appointment to the ABC Board

**Report of the Senate Environment, Communications,
Information Technology and the Arts References Committee**

September 2001

© Commonwealth of Australia 2001

ISBN 0 642 71160 7

This document is produced from camera-ready copy prepared by the Senate Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts References Committee Secretariat, and printed by the Senate Printing Unit, Parliament House, Canberra.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE - 39TH PARLIAMENT

Members:

Senator Lyn Allison (Chair) (AD, VIC)
Senator John Tierney (Deputy Chair) (LP, NSW)
Senator Mark Bishop (ALP, WA)
Senator the Hon Nick Bolkus (ALP, SA)
Senator Kate Lundy (ALP, ACT)
Senator Tsebin Tchen (LP, VIC)

Participating Members:

Senator the Hon Eric Abetz (LP, TAS)	Senator Steve Hutchins (ALP, NSW)
Senator Andrew Bartlett (AD, QLD)	Senator Sue Knowles (LP, WA)
Senator the Hon Ron Boswell (NP, QLD)	Senator Meg Lees (AD, SA)
Senator Bob Brown (AG, TAS)	Senator Sue Mackay (ALP, TAS)
Senator Paul Calvert (LP, TAS)	Senator Brett Mason (LP, QLD)
Senator George Campbell (ALP, NSW)	Senator Julian McGauran (NPA, VIC)
Senator Kim Carr (ALP, VIC)	Senator Jan McLucas (ALP, QLD)
Senator Grant Chapman (LP, SA)	Senator Shayne Murphy (ALP, TAS)
Senator Helen Coonan (LP, NSW)	Senator Marise Payne (LP, NSW)
Senator Winston Crane (LP, WA)	Senator the Hon Chris Schacht (ALP, SA)
Senator Alan Eggleston (LP, WA)	Senator Natasha Stott Despoja (AD, SA)
Senator the Hon John Faulkner (ALP, NSW)	Senator John Watson (LP, TAS)
Senator Alan Ferguson (LP, SA)	Senator Aden Ridgeway (AD, NSW) appointed for arts issues
Senator Jeannie Ferris (LP, SA)	Senator Brian Greig (AD, WA) appointed for matters relating to information technology
Senator the Hon Brian Gibson AM (LP, TAS)	
Senator Brian Harradine (IND, TAS)	
Senator Len Harris (PHON, QLD)	

Committee Secretariat:

Ms Andrea Griffiths, Secretary

Mr Jonathan Curtis, Principal Research Officer

Mr Michael Gallagher, Research Officer

Ms EmmaJane Will, Executive Assistant

Committee Address:

Environment, Communications, Information Technology
and the Arts References Committee

S1.57, Parliament House

Canberra ACT 2600

Tel: 02 6277 3526

Fax: 02 6277 5818

Email: ecita.sen@aph.gov.au

Internet: http://www.aph.gov.au/senate_environment

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE - 39TH PARLIAMENT	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
CHAPTER 1	1
INTRODUCTION	1
Terms of Reference	1
Conduct of the inquiry	1
Background	2
The ABC Board.....	3
Outline of the report	5
CHAPTER 2	7
THE SELECTION CRITERIA: WHO SHOULD BE ON THE BOARD?.....	7
Introduction	7
An independent ABC Board?.....	7
A representative ABC Board.....	20
CHAPTER 3	29
REFORMING THE APPOINTMENT PROCESS	29
Introduction	29
General principles	29
The selection criteria	31
Developing a field of candidates	32
Shortlisting and appointments	33
Other governance issues.....	39
REPORT BY GOVERNMENT SENATORS	47
Introduction	47
Problems with the board – no case to answer	47
Should the ABC be unique?	49
Comments in relation to recommendations.....	50
Conclusion.....	51

LABOR SENATORS' MINORITY REPORT	53
TABLE OF CONTENTS	53
Introduction	55
Impetus for change	56
Alternatives for appointment of board members.....	58
Labor Senators' criticisms of Chair's report	61
Conclusions	63
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY SENATOR BOB BROWN, AUSTRALIAN GREENS.....	65
APPENDIX 1	67
LIST OF SUBMISSIONS	67
APPENDIX 2	87
LIST OF WITNESSES	87
APPENDIX 3	89
THE METHOD OF APPOINTMENT TO BOARD POSITIONS FOR THE BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION	89
Principles underpinning the Code of Practice	89