

Submission re. Review of Australian Broadcasting Services in Asia Pacific Region 2018

I have been visiting various Pacific Islands since 1987, the last time this May, and lived and worked there for eight years from 1995 to 2004. I am very concerned about the need to maintain a strong Australian media presence.

Although it may not be possible to stop China's influence through its rapid advance into the Pacific, I feel it is essential that the ABC be provided with significant additional funding so it is able to provide viable alternative broadcast programmes.

Australia is a Pacific nation, which should be in a position at the very least, to offer a wide variety essential radio and digital services to small island nations relying on unbiased reporting of news, as well as other cultural services. If Australia is to forestall some of China's influence it needs a fully-fledged international broadcasting service providing radio, television and digital services able to encourage and create a conversation between citizens of Australia and Pacific nations. This requires multiple technologies and a great deal more staff in Australia and the region.

It is embarrassing that the Government has made cuts to the ABC's very important international service at a time when other countries are increasing their funding.

The ABC is known and, I believe, respected throughout the region and must have adequate funding so it can again provide its excellent services on a scale the region deserves.