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From: Bill Thompson <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, 6 June 2018 12:44 PM
To: Competitive Neutrality Inquiry
Subject: Australian Broadcasting Corporation

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Dear Sir/Madam,

It is with some concern that once again the Australian Broadcasting Corporation has to defend and justify its public funding against the oft repeated assertions by commercial rivals that it has an unfair advantage over them.

Commercial broadcasters confine themselves to those broadcast areas that assures a commercial return and continuing financial viability. The result is that they necessarily have a narrow focus on what is popular and what financial returns their programming can accrue.

The ABC as the national broadcaster is charged with offering a free to air service to virtually all Australians, and offers a diversity of programs, of which many would have little appeal to commercial broadcasters.

The ABC should and does operate independently of government providing Australians residing from the Torres Straits to Tasmania and from Perth to Townsville, with a service that unites us all, whilst catering to a wide spectrum of interests. Politically independent, the ABC unifies Australians in cultivating a national image of ourselves by entertaining and informing us, in a manner that uniquely enhances our national identity.

None of this impinges on, or is detrimental to, the interests of any commercial broadcaster. There is no intrinsic unfairness between the arrangements of the two streams of broadcasting in Australia, providing the public broadcaster is adequately funded. Of course, that subject opens another argument for another day.

Yours sincerely,

Bill Thompson

(TRB Thompson)

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