

**AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION  
CORPORATE PLAN 2023-24**



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Cover image: Tim Winton in *Ningaloo Nynggulu*. Credit: Artemis Media

This page: James Valentine presents *Breakfast* on ABC Radio Sydney

# OPENING STATEMENT

The Board, as the accountable authority of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, presents the 2023–24 Corporate Plan, prepared in accordance with section 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth) (PGPA Act) and associated rules.

This Corporate Plan is prepared for the 2023–24 reporting period (FY24), and covers the reporting periods FY24, FY25, FY26, FY27 and FY28.

The ABC is accountable to the Australian Government through the Minister for Communications.

As a Commonwealth entity, the ABC operates under the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation Act 1983* (Cth) (ABC Act) and the PGPA Act. The PGPA Act sets standards of governance, performance and accountability for the Corporation, with an emphasis on use of public resources, planning, reporting, and risk management.

The ABC is committed to meeting these requirements and its responsibilities as the nation’s independent public service media organisation. This is reflected in its Five-Year Plan.

In June 2023, the ABC set out its priorities for the next five years in the Five-Year Plan 2023 to 2028. It replaces the original Five-Year Plan, which was set to run from 2020 to 2025.

The new Plan arrives before the end of the first plan to align it with a new five-year funding cycle for the ABC which has given us a further opportunity to adjust our strategy in response to the most recent developments in our operating environment. This includes changes in the external media environment, new technologies, and further shifts in audience consumption trends.

The next five years will be a critical time for the evolution of the ABC. The media landscape driven by technological developments is changing at a speed few could have imagined bringing with it myriad challenges.

While broadcast services will remain important into the future, the ABC must prepare for the inevitable point in time where most of its engagement with its audience will be on digital platforms. Current analysis of the ABC’s operating environment shows that audiences who prefer to use digital platforms will soon exceed audiences for broadcast radio and television.

As this audience shift from traditional radio and TV to digital platforms continues, the ABC will have to adapt promptly to the expectations of its audiences – what they want and how they get it.

During this significant period of change, the ABC will continue to focus on its core purposes and objectives of achieving the highest quality and editorial standards in journalism and other content to maintain the trust of the Australian public and its role as an essential part of Australian social fabric.

The Five-Year Plan will safeguard the ABC’s future by ensuring it delivers value for Australians while protecting its reputation as the nation’s most trusted media organisation.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ita Buttrose". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ita" and last name "Buttrose" clearly distinguishable.

**Ita Buttrose** AC, OBE

Chair, Australian Broadcasting Corporation

# PURPOSE

The ABC exists to serve Australians. The ABC Charter, contained in the ABC Act, requires the ABC to provide ‘innovative and comprehensive’ broadcasting and digital media services for the whole nation; services that contribute to a sense of national identity as they inform, educate and entertain. Now more than ever, the ABC’s ongoing value and relevance will depend on its ability to reach and engage audiences regularly across streaming and on-demand platforms.

The ABC Board’s Five-Year Plan for 2023 to 2028 sets out the ABC’s strategy for evolving its operations in a changing media landscape. The organisation must evolve to continue to fulfil its purpose – as set out in its Charter – at a time when Australian audiences are increasingly fragmented across platforms and devices and have more choices for watching and listening than ever before.

The ABC will continue to ensure that all Australians have access to news, information, and entertainment that reflects who they are. It will also ensure they have news they can trust and access to the conversations that shape the nation.

From investigative journalism to emergency broadcasting, the ABC delivers free public access to the impartial, accurate information that secures and strengthens Australia’s communities and its democracy. Its editorial independence combined with high standards of journalism mean that Australians rank the ABC as the nation’s most trusted news organisation.<sup>1</sup>

The ABC is a major partner and driver of Australia’s creative industries. Distinctively Australian drama, comedy, and entertainment are delivered to the nation across the ABC’s multiple platforms. The ABC is home to arts, science, health and Indigenous affairs programs that inform and enrich Australian lives. Music is part of the ABC’s organisational DNA, and the ABC continues to celebrate and promote Australian music across all genres, and to all ages and tastes.

The ABC is a world leader in children’s education and entertainment. Its programs provide a safe and trusted environment where young audiences can learn, have fun, build self-esteem, acquire problem solving skills and expand their horizons.

The ABC provides content to international audiences including Australians living abroad. This encourages greater awareness of Australia broadly and an appreciation of Australian culture, values and attitudes.

As the organisation evolves, it will always be a place to turn for Australians of any age to keep informed, expand their horizons, and find entertaining content that meets their mood and interests.

1. Roy Morgan Trust Monitor, February 2023

# KEY ACTIVITIES

The ABC achieves its purpose to inform, entertain and educate Australian and international audiences by creating, curating and distributing content that reflects the diversity of the Australian community.

Key activities include:

- **The production and distribution of independent high-impact news and information.** Its reporters cover local, state, and national news, and it maintains its own network of foreign correspondents, particularly in Asia and the Pacific, to tell international stories from an Australian perspective. The coverage includes in-depth reporting and investigations into issues and events. The ABC News website and app are leading destinations for news and information. The ABC News audio stream, available on radio and via ABC listen, offers continuous news. ABC News on broadcast and ABC iview provides dedicated news coverage around the clock. Third-party platforms also play an important role in distributing ABC News content.
- **Commissioning high-quality culturally Australian video content across a range of genres that reflect the Australian experience.** The ABC is the nation's largest producer of scripted content and delivers world-class comedy and children's programs. It provides unique coverage of the arts, science, religion and ethics, health, Indigenous affairs and Australia's rural industries. The ABC's video content is available via broadcast television channels and ABC iview.
- **Communicating emergency information to Australians during critical times.** Natural disasters and emergencies are increasing in frequency and severity, and the ABC's role in supporting and communicating emergency updates continues to grow to reflect the upward trend.
- **Connecting local audiences with the news and issues of the day relevant to their communities via ABC Local Radio stations.** The ABC's capital city stations and 58 regional bureaux create conversations to help connect communities and are an integral part of providing support and vital warnings during times of emergency. The ABC's Local Radio broadcast network reaches 99.7% of the Australian population.
- **The production and distribution of national radio networks and digital radio/streaming stations, including RN for in-depth analysis and thought-provoking ideas, ABC Kids listen for young children and ABC Grandstand for sports fans.** The ABC's music stations and audio streams promote Australian music and offer different styles to meet audience interests, including triple j, Double J, ABC Classic, ABC Jazz and ABC Country. The ABC listen app provides access to all the ABC's radio content live and on-demand.
- **The distribution of content to 40 countries across Asia and the Pacific through its international broadcast services ABC Australia (TV) and ABC Radio Australia and to all countries across the globe with a range of digital and social output.** A news and factual based TV service, ABC Australia aims to showcase the best of Australia to audiences across the region. ABC Radio Australia provides news, entertainment and information to listeners across the Pacific region. Broadcast via FM in 13 important population centres in the Pacific and Timor-Leste, with new transmitters coming online in 2023–24, the network is also accessible digitally live and on-demand. ABC Pacific is a digital and social offer which is designed to appeal to audiences across the region and will be joined during the year with a corresponding digital and social offer ABC Asia. In addition, ABC News operates the Asia Pacific Newsroom with its content fed into these international platforms and is available via [abc.net.au/news](http://abc.net.au/news) to digital audiences internationally.
- **Operating a range of other sites and apps dedicated to specific audiences and interests, such as the ABC Education website, the triple j site and app, and the ABC Kids app.**
- **The distribution of content on social media and other third-party platforms to reach and engage with audiences.**

# OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

## Audience Trends

### Social Media

More than 80% or some 21 million Australians use social media. Social media users are spread across platforms and tend to consume content that they find to be personally relevant. The *YouTube Culture & Trends Report 2022*, for example, found that 65% of younger audiences say content that is personally relevant is more important than content that many others talk about, and 55% watch content that no one they know is personally interested in.

The ABC has an important role to play on third-party platforms, particularly for younger audiences. The ABC reaches 32% of Australians aged 18-29 via its presence on social media platforms. For Australians under 40, social media was the main way they engaged with the ABC for the 2022 Federal Election, ahead of broadcast TV and owned digital platforms for the first time. This highlights the strength of third-party platforms in reaching younger audiences.

At present, most of the large and established platforms, like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, have reached maturity and currently only TikTok is projected to have significant growth over the next three years. To better engage with younger audiences, the ABC will need to increase its reach on platforms with growth opportunities.

As well as serving audiences on the platforms audiences prefer, the ABC is a source of accurate, impartial and trustworthy news in an environment that is otherwise prone to misinformation as well as disinformation. Its ability to produce educational content also creates opportunities to support media literacy and online safety.

### Listening

In Australia, listening to live radio is spread across AM, FM, and DAB+ broadcast services, as well as live streams and “catch-up” radio programs via online services. Together, these services reach 80% of Australians. The fact that reach has remained relatively steady suggests that many people still appreciate the ease of radio and use it when driving, working, or at home. However, the time spent listening to these services is in long-term decline.

Technological advancements are driving structural changes in audience behaviour. With data connectivity improvement and the ubiquitous access to audio in and out of the home, for many Australians, streaming is fast becoming the primary source of access to audio content.

The growth in podcast listening has been a notable trend in recent years. YouTube and Spotify currently attract the most podcast listeners, but competition among global media players is intensifying. This competition is creating greater choice and improving quality. The ABC creates high-quality, award-winning podcasts across a broad range of topics, and must find a way to increase discoverability to reach more audiences.

With music streaming (Spotify, YouTube Music, Apple Music) performing better than traditional broadcasting in terms of discoverability and personalisation, these global platforms are having an impact on music consumption and the ways audiences discover new music. Only 23% of 18–34 age group rely on radio to discover new music. They locate new sounds through music apps (58%), social media (53%) and movies/ TV shows (44%).<sup>2</sup> The cannibalisation of traditional music radio broadcasting by global music streaming platforms and social media (TikTok) is set to continue in the years to come. The ABC plays an important role in promoting and supporting Australian music, and in this environment must adapt and remain relevant.

Total AM radio reach has declined from 44% to 34% since 2017.<sup>3</sup> Part of the challenge relates to the AM signal, which does not support high-quality audio and is prone to disruption in built-up areas. It also requires significant power, giving it a large carbon footprint and high costs. Switching from AM could generate transmission saving which could be reinvested into content. However, AM can cover large areas, which is vital for maintaining services in a country like Australia, especially during natural disasters. Alternatives to AM do exist but would require extensive replacement of broadcast infrastructure and consumer devices. Local radio will continue on AM services, however the ABC will continue to examine the viability of alternative services.

2. The Music Network (September 2022) “Where are Australians discovering new music?”.

3. ACMA (2023) Communications and media in Australia: How we watch and listen to content.

## Watching

Audiences across all demographics continue to embrace online viewing and reduce their use of broadcast TV.

In the ABC's 2022 Video-On-Demand Usage Survey, 78% of Australians claimed to have used a video-on-demand (VOD) service in the past week, compared to 70% for broadcast television. While the trend towards online viewing is most evident among teenage and young adult audiences, audiences aged 55+ have shown the largest year-on-year increase in VOD usage (57% in 2022, up from 52% in 2021).

The ABC has responded to these trends with improvements to ABC iview, including personalised recommendations and a user log-in to allow seamless movement between devices. Ongoing investment in ABC iview, as well as the content it offers, will ensure that ABC iview continues to meet audience expectations.

At the same time, it is clear that younger audiences will be harder to reach on the ABC's own platforms. The ABC will need to look for ways to reach and engage younger audiences using third-party platforms and support them with a digital-first strategy across commissioning, production, and distribution.

While the ABC continues to improve the value and appeal of its digital content, products, and services, it must continue to cater to important audiences for free-to-air television. Traditional broadcast services are still popular across some older audience segments, even if consumed via internet-connected smart TVs. The ABC will also maintain such services for Australians unable to access internet services.

## News Consumption

While overall news consumption in Australia is high, there are clear signs of news fatigue and disengagement.

The proportion of Australians reporting low or no interest in news grew from 36% in 2016 to 47% in 2023, while active avoidance of news increased.<sup>4</sup> In particular, the number who said they "often" avoid news rose from 8% to 14% over the five years to 2023. This trend likely reflects in part the recent pandemic and wider geopolitical instability and may reverse over the next five years in the wake of COVID-19. However, it appears more plausible to imagine lower levels of interest and greater avoidance of news continuing given the likelihood of continued geopolitical and climate-related disruption.

At the same time, Australian news audiences are fragmenting. There are clear generational differences in Australians' preferred news platforms. The proportion who use television as a primary source of news rises with age, while the use of social media sources shows the inverse trend.

This fragmentation is expected to increase over the next five years as people's use of broadcast television and radio continues to decline. This shift from appointment-based consumption will directly affect audiences for scheduled news bulletins and current affairs programs. News providers will need to increasingly focus on on-demand services and personalisation to ensure they remain relevant.

Alongside generational differences in platform and device use, research indicates that younger Australians also have different attitudes from traditional news consumers. ABC research on the needs of 18–29-year-olds suggests higher levels of scepticism about news reports and a propensity to regard no news as position-free. In response, they validate news using multiple sources, rather than to trust a single source. Younger Australians also have broader conceptions of "news" that includes a range of interesting information.

In this fractured environment, the ABC will need to adapt its news offering to meet the divergent expectations of the audiences on the different platforms it uses. At the same time, the imperative to produce quality journalism and maintain trust will remain. In a largely saturated online market for news, competition will intensify around the digital experience, including on-demand news, localisation, customisation, and personalisation.

The Corporation is the only news organisation in Australia with the scale and expertise to deliver sustained coverage across natural disasters, and it continues to invest in building capability within Emergency Broadcasting teams across content, resource and digital functionality. In the past, Australians have turned to the ABC for reliable and comprehensive coverage of such events through its broadcast and, increasingly, its digital news services. If the number of extreme events increase, the ABC may face a challenge maintaining its high level of coverage and expertise across more events.

4. Digital News Report: Australia 2023, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism-University of Canberra

## Media Market Environment

The Australian media environment has evolved rapidly in response to audience demand for IP-based and on-demand services. As broadcast and pay-TV viewing has declined, free-to-air TV providers have launched broadcast video-on-demand (BVOD) and subscription video-on-demand (SVOD) services. Also, pay-TV provider Foxtel has launched multiple SVOD channels and is seeking to transition its subscribers to IP-based services. Meanwhile, global VOD services – both giants and niche providers – have increased competition for the attention of Australian audiences.

In the audio environment, time spent listening to broadcast radio has declined, while the audiences for streaming services and podcasts have grown significantly. All major Australian radio stations have introduced live-streaming services in response, but they are competing with global operators like Spotify and Apple Music.

The trend towards digital platforms and away from broadcast will continue and competition for audiences on digital platforms will intensify. As overall audience growth becomes more difficult to achieve, this may result in mergers, acquisitions, and consolidation, matched by decreases in editorial diversity. It is worth noting that, in Australia, there are now few legislative barriers to consolidation.

The steady decline in local news from commercial providers accelerated sharply during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in regional Australia, leaving many communities without a local news service. The Public Interest Journalism Project reports that, in December 2022, some 32 local government areas did not have a local news publisher, four of which also did not receive local radio news.<sup>5</sup> The ABC has an important role to play in providing news in underserved areas and, in 2022, recruited more than 50 additional journalists across regional Australia. However, the ABC can only contribute to solving the problem of “news deserts”, as Australia’s democracy is best served when communities have access to a range of local news sources.

## Regulatory and Policy Settings

In the regulatory environment, two clear trends continue to shape the media landscape around the world. The first is the trend for governments to tighten regulations around “big tech” companies in the market, and the second is regulation to protect privacy and personal data.

Until it becomes clearer what regulations around “big tech” companies will be implemented, the impact on the ABC is unknown. The ABC will continue to monitor developments and participate in policy debates.

The review of the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) is currently underway. The outcome is likely to be an increase in consumer power with respect to their own personal information. With the trend in media towards increasing personalisation of services to improve user experience and the privacy trend towards transparency and an individual’s agency, the ABC will continue to carefully consider and balance its collection and use of personal information.

In Australia, the 2022 change of government reset policy development in several areas. The Government announced its intention to modernise Australian media regulations and has committed to introducing a prominence regime and imposing an Australian-content quota on video streaming services, both of which will potentially affect the ABC – the former may help improve the discoverability of ABC on-demand services, while the latter is likely to reshape the economics of the supply of audio-visual programming. These changes, which are expected to be implemented in the first year of this plan, are expected to be followed by a range of other regulatory adjustments.

Changes like this create a degree of uncertainty in the Australian regulatory environment in the short-to-medium term. The ABC will need to remain engaged in the development of policy and be prepared to respond to new challenges and opportunities arising from it.

A number of additional policy reform processes remain underway that will shape the future media regulatory environment and could have implications for the Corporation into the future. These include:

- A new five-year funding cycle for the ABC commencing July 2023.
- The intention to introduce a minimum Australian content quota on Streaming Services, as noted above.
- The Government’s intention to implement a legislated prominence framework, which would shape the way TV applications and/or content are presented to Australian audiences. The intention is to ensure that local TV services can be easily found on TV devices, so that they can continue to contribute to Australia’s public and cultural life.

5. Australian News Data Report, Public Interest Journalism Project December 2022

- The intention to develop an Indo-Pacific Broadcasting Strategy to boost Australian content and voices in the region, create more audiences across the Indo-Pacific region, and support media capacity-building in the Pacific. As part of this strategy, the Government announced additional funding to support the Corporation's international activities in October 2022 and May 2023, which will enable it to expand its services to audiences in Australia's neighbourhood.
- The undertaking of a broad and comprehensive review of the effectiveness of Australia's copyright enforcement regime to make sure it remains fit-for-purpose, and a consideration of opportunities to improve Australia's copyright framework.
- Investment in digital and media literacy to empower Australian children and young people to become critical, responsive and active citizens online.
- The Government's intention to legislate to provide the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) with new powers to hold digital platforms to account and improve efforts to combat harmful misinformation and disinformation in Australia.
- An ongoing process for the review of the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*, with the Government releasing proposed reforms for public consultation in February 2023.
- The Department continues to work towards the replan of the FM broadcasting services band in Perth. This may create opportunities for the ABC in the future to provide improved quality radio services in the Perth market.

With several of the above proposals still in development, the ABC will continue to engage in these and other regulatory and policy processes. The ABC will also continue to monitor developments in overseas markets to the extent that they have the potential to inform the actions of policymakers in Australia.

## Financial and Planning Context

The ABC faces an increasingly complex operating environment that will continue to make long-term planning difficult. New platforms and technologies will continue to emerge and potentially disrupt the market. However, the media sector will also see increased competition, consolidation, and government regulation, as noted above.

One development that will help the ABC in this environment will be the Australian Government's decision to establish five-year funding cycles for the national broadcasters. This will bring greater certainty in relation to funding and support longer-term planning, especially in relation to capital projects.

At the same time, inflationary pressures in the broader economic environment, such as in the energy sector, are impacting on the operating costs of the ABC.

There are several other factors that could also disrupt planning due to their impact on the ABC's budget or the ABC's operating environment. These include:

- The need to further accelerate the modernisation of the ABC's production and distribution technology to keep pace with audience behaviours and secure longer-term operating efficiencies. This will need to be managed alongside the need to maintain a level of broadcast services.
- The need for the ABC to adapt rapidly and "hedge its bets" in some circumstances. For example, while the ABC must produce bespoke content for third-party platforms, it must maintain its own platforms and always be prepared for a third-party platform to fail or become compromised in some way.
- Potential risks to existing partnership funding. This could include an end to funding agreements with Google and Facebook (Meta) and greater competition for funding from bodies like Screen Australia.
- The likelihood that operational, compliance, and other costs will continue to rise in the business environment where requirements in areas like cyber-security, sustainability, and privacy safeguards are expected to increase.
- The impact of the pandemic on the economy and migration created a skills shortage in some areas and these effects are expected to continue for several years. The ABC may encounter skill shortages for the roles it needs to operate into the future. To mitigate the impact, the ABC is focused on effective workforce planning for early identification of future skills, as well as identifying where entry-level programs (for example traineeships, cadetships, and internships) can provide new pipelines for sourcing talent and help to build capability within.
- The effects of climate change may increase the importance of the ABC's emergency broadcasting relative to other activities and influence decisions in relation to service access and reliability. Ensuring the resilience of ABC operations may also require a higher level of funding.

The factors outlined above will challenge the ABC to align its resources to the highest-value activities. The Corporation must focus on prioritisation to strike the right balance of services for audiences.

## The Technology Environment

For the past two decades, networked and mobile computer technologies have repeatedly disrupted the production, distribution, discovery, and consumption of media in Australia. The COVID-19 pandemic led to increased internet use and accelerated a number of behavioural changes, including greater use of on-demand services, remote work, and mobile journalism. Over the next five years, the speeds and capacity of network connections will grow with upgrades to the NBN and mobile networks. At the same time, more devices and homes will become “smart” and more cars will be “connected”.

Digitisation and network integration are enabling new, flexible production methods and more efficient means of delivering higher-quality services and applications to audiences. Virtualisation and cloud computing, for example, make possible decentralised production from any networked location and enable digital playout of media services. Likewise, better use of data facilitates product personalisation and more effective product development and resource management.

Recent advances in artificial intelligence (AI) and 3D technologies are providing new possibilities for content creation that have the potential to change or replace creative roles and processes. Some are available at little cost and potentially blur the lines between amateur and professional production.

During 2022, a number of generative AI systems emerged with the capacity to produce novel content that can appear indistinguishable from human creative output. This synthetic creativity includes the generation of text, images and computer code, while video and audio generators are in development. These technologies raise ethical, philosophical, and legal questions, and some creators whose work was used to train the engines have launched copyright challenges. Moreover, generative AI systems are constrained by the data used to train them and text-based generators, such as the ChatGPT family, have been shown to reflect biases and include demonstrably false information in their outputs. The extent to which these limitations can be addressed in future iterations of the technology is likely to affect their viability for use in ABC production.

Similarly, AI is enabling a range of synthetic performance technologies. Text-to-speech engines appear to be reaching the point where they are indistinguishable from human speakers and can be trained to mimic the voices of individuals. “Deepfake” technologies that create simulated video of real people have been used in film and television, as well as for less lawful purposes. In addition, 3D modelling and rendering tools developed for the film and videogame industries are enabling the creation and animation of

increasingly lifelike virtual humans. As they continue to develop, these technologies will enable new forms of production, but are likely to raise ethical issues if they displace human performers.

Virtualised production and performance spaces based on green screens and LED “volumes” that allow 3D computer imagery to be merged with video of live performances are becoming increasingly sophisticated and affordable to broadcasters. Virtual sets will become more common and more elaborate over the life of this Plan.

For the ABC, these technologies may represent opportunities to realise efficiencies and improve services. For example, AI-based transcription and translation may provide ways to make ABC services more accessible and AI-based video may allow significant scaling of bespoke weather and election coverage at a more granular level. At the same time, developing and training such systems to meet specific ABC needs will be time and resource intensive. Further, synthetic creativity and performance technologies are likely to present a range of risks that the Corporation will need to navigate carefully. The ABC will need to invest in ensuring it is able to stay abreast of developments in these areas.

To realise these opportunities and meet audience expectations, the ABC will need to modernise its infrastructure, systems and capabilities, as well as make better use of data. This will require further investment in technology and connectivity that achieves operational excellence, including end-to-end digital processes for production. It will need to collect data to drive decision-making and give audiences the ability to personalise services.

At the same time, the ABC will need to maintain its established broadcast services to ensure that all Australians can continue to access the ABC. Broadcast radio and television are expected to remain important in some form for ABC audiences for at least another 15 years. The ABC must balance the replacement of broadcast equipment with investment in digital platforms. Maintaining broadcast operations while funding modernisation will be a critical challenge for the Corporation.

## Workforce Capabilities

The ABC has been telling stories for more than 90 years. But the way stories are told never stands still. Digital media, streaming services, mobile technology, and artificial intelligence are all having an impact on the way content is sourced, created, published, shared, and archived. A critical element in this digital space is content discovery, which requires the consistent application of rich metadata.

The changing world of content creation has had an impact on the ABC. Recently, it has introduced new roles and skills around reporting, social media distribution, and video production. There is more change to come. More established tasks and methods will need to cease or be scaled back to allow for the new workflows required for the digital media environment. And this will require a clear roadmap for training and transition.

Workplaces, too, are changing. Employees and organisations have embraced more flexible approaches to work hours and time spent in offices. A large part of this stems from the value found in a greater focus on mental health and wellbeing. This in turn has helped organisations accept more people seeking work on a part-time or short-term basis. Both organisations and prospective employees are also more attuned to social values, advancing the development of diversity and inclusion policies and environmental sustainability.

As a values-driven organisation, the ABC has long been an employer of choice. To maintain this and remain competitive in the labour market, it will need to bring together these values and the new approaches to work and workplaces. However, perhaps the greatest challenge will be building a culture that supports the needs of today and tomorrow more than the needs of yesterday, and an ABC that adapts readily to a changing environment.

The current media environment also brings pressure to produce work at speed and deliver high volumes of new content. Within this, the ABC's culture must keep workloads sustainable and avoid producing low-value content. It must have an audience-first, digital mindset and maintain a continuous effort to sharpen processes, promote agility, acquire new skills, and break free from rigid roles and structures that constrain teamwork and collaboration.

## Cooperation

In achieving its purpose, the ABC relies on cooperation with a wide range of Australian organisations, including Federal Government, State Government, non-Government, and local community groups, who are critical to the ABC in delivering its content and services to audiences. The ABC thanks all its partners for their valuable contribution.

These co-operative relationships include:

- Local, state and federal departments and agencies who collaborate with the ABC to bring large live events to audiences, to communicate critical information, and to deliver special projects to segments of the community.
- A broad range of national and state-based galleries, orchestras, libraries, museums, universities and science organisations who work with the ABC to share information, ideas, exhibits and performances with audiences across all platforms.
- Screen agencies and organisations, such as Screen Australia and state-based agencies, who are crucial to the development and production of the ABC's screen content. The screen agencies provide funding support to ABC productions and work together with the ABC to support broader policy objectives related to content, platforms, screen business and development of screen practitioners. The ABC also collaborates with a range of screen industry organisations on content initiatives, practitioner development and policy considerations.
- A diverse range of organisations who work in partnership with the ABC to bring coverage of important festivals, events and sports, with many longstanding relationships across the country.
- Emergency and weather agencies across the country who are crucial to the ABC being able to deliver emergency broadcasting and other important information to communities during disasters and major weather events.
- Indigenous media and educational organisations that enable language-based initiatives, staff secondments, two-way learning and media skills transfers.
- Music bodies who work together with the ABC on content opportunities, including concert recording and broadcasting, audience development and conferences.

- State education departments who join with the ABC to deliver high-quality education content that aligns with school curricula. ABC Education is also a member of the Australian Media Literacy Alliance, and cooperates regularly with museums, universities, galleries, parks and others to deliver educational content to Australians.
- The ABC continues to learn from and share its experience with public media groups around the world and works with them to support public media outcomes. The ABC also teams up with these groups on content initiatives, with recent examples including the Kindred Animation Collaboration with CBC (Canada) and a science documentary film collaboration with Channel 4 (UK), France Télévisions, ZDF (Germany), CBC, SVT (Sweden) and ORF (Austria).
- The ABC works collaboratively with SBS in relation to content sharing and to realise benefits and reduce costs in areas such as digital television transmission, satellite distribution and captioning. This is an ongoing process with more benefits expected to be realised over time.



Independent and trusted news with Jeremy Fernandez

# THE ABC FIVE-YEAR PLAN 2023–28

The ABC launched its Five-Year Plan 2023–2028 in June 2023.<sup>6</sup> The ABC has always evolved to meet the needs and interests of Australian audiences as well as the changing media landscape. Over the next five years, this evolution will continue across new frontiers as new technologies change the way the ABC works and how it serves its audiences. Through these changes, the ABC’s commitment to inform and entertain all Australians and hold itself to the highest standards for quality and editorial rigour will remain unchanged.

The 2023–24 Corporate Plan extends to 2027–28 to align with the period covered by the Five-Year Plan.

## OUR VISION

“  
**AN ESSENTIAL PART OF DAILY LIFE FOR ALL AUSTRALIANS.”**

The ABC will have an essential role in Australian life. We will produce content that responds to the diverse needs of audiences and make it accessible on the platforms where it will have the greatest impact. Our independent public-interest journalism will combat misinformation and strengthen democracy. We will offer entertainment that appeals to different ages and desires, whether it’s to laugh, relax, find comfort, or become lost in a fascinating story or topic. We will ensure Australians have trustworthy information that’s relevant and helpful to their daily lives and to the well-being of their communities.



ABC Longreach: On the ground in communities with reporter Eleanor Grounds.

6. The ABC’s Five-Year Plan is available online at <https://about.abc.net.au/press-releases/abc-five-year-plan-2023-2028-an-essential-part-of-daily-life-for-all-australians/>

# STRATEGIC PILLARS

## 1. We prioritise the trust of our audiences

We will prioritise and strengthen the trust that our audiences place in us by bolstering our independence, integrity, reliability, and transparency. We will be embedded and engaged in local communities. We will include social responsibility goals, such as diversity, inclusion and environmental sustainability, in all aspects of our operations.

## 2. We deliver compelling content that builds a lifelong relationship with Australians

We will create, curate, and distribute compelling Australian content that informs and entertains audiences of all ages. Our content will be easy to find and enjoy. The ABC brand will be known for quality Australian content with wide appeal and for specialised content across different genres, topics of interest, and audience needs.

## 3. We reflect contemporary Australia

We will create content that reflects contemporary Australia. This contributes to a sense of national identity while reflecting the cultural and geographic diversity of the Australian community. We will inform, educate, and entertain audiences in ways that are relevant, relatable and inclusive for Australians with different backgrounds and interests.

## 4. We make sustainable choices in allocating resources

We will make sustainable choices in allocating resources. We will operate efficiently and align our resources to both current and future audience needs within the limits of our funding. We will always deliver value through our commitment to financial responsibility and accountability.

Bernadette Whata in *Gugu naGogo* (The Kaleidoscope Films)

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The ABC's strategic priorities for 2023—28 outline our response to the significant opportunities and challenges in the Australian media landscape.

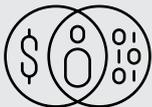
The ABC is Australia's most trusted media organisation and its most important cultural institution. These priorities will ensure that the ABC evolves, making necessary changes to strengthen its ability to deliver these outcomes for audiences now and into the future.



We will engage audiences on the platforms they prefer, delivering relatable high-quality content for ABC and third-party digital platforms.



We will consolidate and rebrand some broadcast services as more of our audiences move to digital platforms.



We will prioritise investment in making it easier for audiences to discover ABC content, products and services.



We will expand our use of strategic partnerships to increase effectiveness of content, services, and research and development.



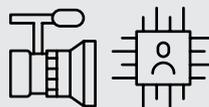
We will be in more communities, including online, and foster national conversations across a range of perspectives and points-of-view.



We will prioritise investment in outstanding digital products that achieve the highest standards for user experience.



We will invest in our people, building the capabilities we need for a digital-first ABC.



We will accelerate the modernisation of our business and production systems.



We will put inclusion and diversity at the heart of everything we do.



We will reduce the impact of ABC operations on the environment.

# FINANCIAL INFORMATION

According to the Portfolio Budget Statements 2023–24, the ABC is appropriated funds to undertake two principal activities. These activities and the forward estimates are set out below:

## 1. Providing Australian and international audiences with radio, television and digital media services

<b>Resources</b>	<b>2023–24 Budget</b>	<b>2024–25 Forward estimates</b>	<b>2025–26 Forward estimates</b>	<b>2026–27 Forward estimates</b>
Program 1.1 — ABC General Operational Activities				
Expenditure (\$'000)	1,024,242	1,074,942	1,100,987	1,086,774

## 2. Managing the broadcast and transmission of ABC radio and television services within Australia

<b>Resources</b>	<b>2023–24 Budget</b>	<b>2024–25 Forward estimates</b>	<b>2025–26 Forward estimates</b>	<b>2026–27 Forward estimates</b>
Program 1.2 — ABC Transmission and Distribution Services				
Expenditure (\$'000)	202,038	208,228	213,949	218,806

A summary of financial information for the 2023–24 budget and the forward estimates for the ABC is set out below:

## Forward estimates

<b>Revenue</b>	<b>2023–24 Budget \$'000</b>	<b>2024–25 Forward estimates \$'000</b>	<b>2025–26 Forward estimates \$'000</b>	<b>2026–27 Forward estimates \$'000</b>
ABC Government Appropriations				
Operational Appropriations	1,137,568	1,196,101	1,229,215	1,227,626
Total Appropriations	1,137,568	1,196,101	1,229,215	1,227,626
Own Source Revenue	86,338	85,451	84,887	77,954
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>1,223,906</b>	<b>1,281,552</b>	<b>1,314,102</b>	<b>1,305,580</b>
<b>Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>1,226,280</b>	<b>1,283,170</b>	<b>1,314,936</b>	<b>1,305,580</b>
<b>Capital Expenditure</b>	<b>130,770</b>	<b>94,477</b>	<b>92,420</b>	<b>90,646</b>
<b>Borrowings</b>	<b>2,268</b>	<b>2,268</b>	<b>2,268</b>	<b>2,268</b>

Source: 2023–24 Portfolio Budget Statements, May 2023 Federal Budget.

Note: the inclusion of this table satisfies the requirement of s.31B(1)(b) of the ABC Act in relation to forecasts of revenue and expenditure.



# THE ABC IN 2028

By 2028 the ABC will be an integrated digital operation and most of the audience engagement with the ABC will be through its digital products.

## What a digital-first ABC means

Over the next five years the ABC will undergo a significant transition towards becoming an integrated digital operation. This requires a digital-first approach, which will better serve ABC audiences on all platforms, including TV and radio.

As audiences increasingly replace broadcast services with on-demand, social and other digital media, the ABC must ensure that it is prepared to serve a digital-majority audience. At the same time, it will continue to meet the needs of Australian radio and television audiences. Broadcast services will continue to be a major way that the ABC expects audiences to access its products over the course of the plan. While this means that television channels won't be turned off within the next five years, the ABC must begin to plan for the future.

The way audiences consume content in today's digital environment is different to the past, and it will continue to change and evolve. A digital-first ABC means that audiences will benefit from a closer alignment of content to their needs, interests, and preferences.

The ABC will introduce a digital-first approach across more of its content commissioning. Made-for-digital content will be produced for ABC iView and ABC listen as well as major third-party platforms.

Digital tools, workflows and automation will be used throughout the ABC's operations, and digital channels will be increasingly prioritised for communication.

Hard Quiz with Tom Gleeson

## By 2028 we will...



Have implemented a digital-first approach to commissioning, producing, and distributing content, while continuing to serve national audiences on broadcast radio and TV.



Have increased investment in our core digital products as most audience engagement with the ABC is through our digital products.



Have greater audience awareness.



Offer entertainment that appeals to different ages and desires, particularly among younger audiences.



Be an integrated digital operation.



Have produced content that responds to the diverse needs of audiences and our independent public-interest journalism will combat misinformation and strengthen democracy.



Still be the most trusted media organisation and its most important cultural institution. In times of confusion, curiosity and crisis, the ABC will be there for all Australians.

# ABC OPERATING PLAN FY2024 – FY2028

This Operating Plan reflects the strategic priorities of the Five-Year Plan and sets out the initiatives that the ABC will undertake to address the changes it needs to make and the areas where it needs to focus its efforts and resources over the next twelve months.

## **1. We will engage audiences on the platforms they prefer, delivering relatable high-quality content for ABC and third-party digital platforms.**

By 2028, more than half of the ABC's audience engagement will be via digital services. The focus will be on bringing audiences to ABC platforms while also creating content for audiences who prefer social media and other third-party platforms. This will ensure it provides relevant content, in engaging formats, for younger audiences, especially those who do not use traditional broadcast services.

Over the next year, the ABC will undertake the following initiatives to increase audience engagement on ABC platforms:

- Increase focus on data-led commissioning, which integrates audience needs, insights and performance into commissioning, distribution and product development processes.
- Enhance the audiences' experience of ABC News on ABC iview through improved curation of news content, an increased volume of digital-first news video, and tailored on-demand video news using personalisation.
- Commission digital-first content informed by data and focused on stories of interest to infrequent ABC News users, especially those aged under 35, people from CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse) communities, and people located in outer suburbs and big regional centres.

The following initiatives will focus efforts on improving engagement on third-party platforms:

- Increase investment in commissioning, distribution and community management in line with audience opportunity.
- More news stories of interest will be created for younger Australians on growing platforms such as Tik Tok.
- The ABC's content division will commission bespoke content for third-party platforms to meet the needs of younger audiences with relevant content on the platforms they use.

## **2. We will prioritise investment in outstanding digital products that achieve the highest standards for user experience.**

Increasing the ABC's investment in its core digital products – ABC listen, ABC iview and ABC News – will help audiences discover the content that's most pertinent and interesting to them and will meet their desire for ease-of-use and accessibility.

To continue its efforts to deliver outstanding ABC digital products, the ABC will:

- Improve digital products and services for greater ease-of-use, accessibility and content discovery. This includes improving and extending personalisation features, expanding audio description and transcription, and making it easier to navigate and discover content across ABC iview, ABC listen, and ABC News.
- Create a tailored on-demand video news service using personalisation and curated news content on ABC iview, while also experimenting with product changes and enhancements on the ABC News app and ABC News website.
- Improve the user experience on the ABC Emergency site, including increasing use of digital notifications and testing the feasibility of multi-language support for warnings.

## **3. We will consolidate and rebrand some broadcast services as more of our audiences move to digital platforms.**

The ABC will continue to broadcast television and local radio services across the period of the plan.

However, as audiences take up ABC audio via digital services, the ABC will be ready to rationalise its broadcast radio services and align them better with audience needs. It will also reposition its television multi-channels to increase relevance for broadcast viewers, and help audiences find and enjoy their favourite ABC content on digital platforms as they make the switch from broadcast.

This initiative considers the long-term outlook. The ABC expects broadcast services to continue to be a major way for audiences to access its products over the course of the plan. The ABC remains committed to broadcasting local radio across the country.

As part of this strategic priority, the ABC will:

- Support awareness for audiences wanting to use its digital products.
- Continue to broadcast television channels and review the genre mix across its broadcast offering to better serve audiences.
- Continue its commitment to broadcasting local radio across the country and strengthening the current offering.

#### **4. We will prioritise investment in making it easier for audiences to discover ABC content, products and services.**

The ABC will invest more to increase awareness and use of its content and services, enhancing value and trust in the ABC. This will include more external promotion, as well as cross-platform promotion, improved branding across ABC touchpoints and better metadata and personalisation to support recommendations across ABC digital products. There will be a clear focus on ensuring that younger adult audiences, in particular, are aware of the content the ABC has to offer them

To raise awareness and discovery of the ABC's content, the ABC will:

- Increase investment in off-platform marketing alongside other measures to help audiences discover the ABC's range of content.
- Develop targeted approaches for engaging with under-served audiences to bring greater awareness to the ABC.
- Deliver a coordinated national editorial campaign to build awareness of the ABC and deliver community engagement around local content for local audiences.

#### **5. We will be in more communities, including online, and foster national conversations across a range of perspectives and points-of-view.**

The ABC will place a greater focus on being a part of the communities it serves, whether in the cities, rural and regional areas, or online spaces. By enhancing its local presence, the ABC will help communities raise the issues that matter to them and encourage inclusive national debates that canvas a range of different views.

The activities the ABC will undertake to achieve this priority include:

- Relocate a range of Ultimo-based content makers and program teams to Parramatta in early 2024.
- Decentralise ABC News operations to report from a broader range of locations and establish short-term bureaux in outer suburban areas.
- Improve equipment and capabilities for better quality remote and regional production.
- Offer more stories of interest including climate, sport, and specialist reporting to better appeal to under 35-year-olds, CALD communities, and people in outer suburbs and big regional centres.
- Enhance engagement with communities that include mostly lighter ABC audiences by hosting events to engage with those communities and telling their stories.

#### **6. We will expand our use of strategic partnerships to increase effectiveness of content, services, and research and development.**

The ABC will build on its extensive and long-standing partnerships across Australia's creative industries to increase the impact of its investments. It will seek co-production partnerships with a wider range of providers, including global operators, and investigate and build partnerships with other public service media providers and other institutions to improve services for Australian audiences.

To expand on its use of partnerships, the ABC will:

- Establish a partnerships team within the News Strategy team to coordinate and evaluate connections with the aim of increasing the reach and impact of ABC News.
- Constructive journalism is a reporting style that seeks to better contextualise news stories, and often points to efforts to address societal or other problems. The ABC News team will seek to establish a culture of constructive journalism by partnering with the global Solutions Journalism Network, an organisation which supports this style of reporting.
- Expand on the ABC's international screen partnerships and collaborations.
- Build sustainable relationships with Indigenous and diverse media and community organisations, especially in the outer suburbs of major cities and regional and remote areas.
- Undertake local news sustainability pilots together with experts from Deakin University as part of a three-year partnership to research and design initiatives whose outcomes would support the sustainability of the local news ecosystem with a focus on underserved areas.

## **7. We will accelerate the modernisation of our business and production systems.**

Over the next five years, the ABC will accelerate the replacement of ageing and end-of-life equipment and update its production infrastructure. This will go beyond any like-for-like replacement and involve adopting new technologies and methods, such as the use of virtual production studios.

Along with new ways of working, integrating new technologies, such as AI, will be essential to the ABC's transition to a digital-first media organisation. It will enable the ABC to maintain its importance to Australian audiences and create opportunities for efficiency and the resilience and reliability required to maintain their trust.

To accelerate its technology transformation, the ABC will undertake the following activities:

- Embed the content teams restructure and establish a streamlined commissioning process for audio and video content.
- Improve rostering efficiency with the implementation of PeopleHub and establish a new Workforce Services team to drive roster standardisation and enable benefits realisation.
- Implement new Media Asset Management (MAM) tools to streamline the management of digital assets for the ABC. The system will enable operational efficiency through the reduction of manual processes, increase collaboration for content makers and ensure ABC owned media assets are catalogued, stored and distributed more effectively.
- Replace legacy technology to improve the audience experience and offer higher video quality on high-definition channels.
- Undertake continuous improvement of processes, frameworks and controls to assess cybersecurity threats and meet compliance requirements.

## **8. We will invest in our people, building the capabilities we need for a digital-first ABC.**

The ABC will acquire and develop the technical, editorial, production, and leadership skills needed to reshape the ABC as a digital media organisation that will serve Australian audiences into the future.

To achieve this priority the ABC will:

- Create and implement a digital workforce plan, which will support an increase in digital capability across a range of different digital skills.
- Review the divisional talent strategy to further focus efforts on attracting and retaining staff.
- Develop a central hub for skills development and information sharing for ABC teams to make it easier for ABC staff to build capabilities.

## **9. We will put inclusion and diversity at the heart of everything we do.**

The ABC aspires to build a culture of belonging for its people, one that reflects and celebrates the many identities of Australians today and inspires greater creativity in the content and connection to the community that it serves.

In accordance with the *Reconciliation Action Plan 2023–26 (RAP)* and the *Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging Plan 2023–26*, the ABC seeks to recruit, develop and retain a workforce that reflects the diversity of the Australian community and also to foster an inclusive workforce culture.

To achieve this priority the ABC will:

- Launch an organisation-wide anti-racism and discrimination campaign to provide employees with resources, training and communication on how to respond to racism and discrimination.
- Embed practices to improve inclusion and accessibility of content, making it more accessible to more Australians.
- Develop a Disability Action Plan (DAP) that champions the rights of employees with disability. This project will include a review of current workplace policies and practices, and address gaps found in accessibility and inclusion of people with disability.
- Continue to encourage a workforce environment that makes all staff feel valued and respected, and show respect for and understanding of different cultures. Training and development initiatives, including the development of team-based Inclusion Action Plans, will support more inclusive and accessible ABC workplaces.
- Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) is a right that Indigenous people have to protect their traditional art and culture. The ABC will expand its (ICIP) framework for use across the ABC's external screen-content productions.
- Expand on current program of ongoing secondments/placements of ABC employees with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media and language organisations.

## **10. We will reduce the impact of ABC operations on the environment.**

The ABC is committed to achieving net zero emissions by 2030 and will engage with suppliers to further reduce the impact of ABC operations and its use of resources on the environment. The ABC will include annual targets in the Corporate Plan 2025-2028.

The ABC will undertake the following activities to achieve its target:

- Deliver a capital plan that includes energy efficiency measures and solar installations. A request for tender for energy procurement for ABC properties is planned for 2023.
- Transition to lower-emission vehicles where operationally feasible.
- Coordinate centralised waste-management disposal plan.
- Develop a supplier-engagement plan to track and reduce Scope 3 emissions in line with target and support the organisation in sustainable procurement.



Landline's Pip Courtney celebrating rural Australia

# MEASURES

The KPIs are linked to the strategic priorities identified above. They cover a four-year period to reflect the Portfolio Budget Statements

Audience Outcome	Measure	Source	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27
<b>The ABC is valued</b>	Value of the ABC to the Australian Community	ABC Corporate Tracking Survey	82%	82%	82%	82%
	<b>Why this is important:</b> This KPI reflects the ABC’s purpose, which is to deliver valued services that reflect and contribute to Australian society, culture and identity.					
<b>Driving trust in the ABC</b>	The ABC is more* trusted by Australians than any other media <small>*=&gt;10% above commercial media / newspapers</small>	ABC Corporate Tracking Survey <small>*=&gt;10% above commercial media / newspapers</small>	More trusted than other media organisations <small>*=&gt;10% above commercial media / newspapers</small>	More trusted than other media organisations <small>*=&gt;10% above commercial media / newspapers</small>	More trusted than other media organisations <small>*=&gt;10% above commercial media / newspapers</small>	More trusted than other media organisations <small>*=&gt;10% above commercial media / newspapers</small>
	<b>Why this is important:</b> The ABC is Australia’s most trusted media organisation and must maintain this position as a place that all Australians can turn to with confidence.					
<b>Audience engagement</b>	% of Australian population using more than 1 ABC platform	ABC Corporate Tracking Survey	55%	56%	57%	58%
	<b>Why this is important:</b> Use of multiple ABC platforms reflects the ABC’s success at being an essential part of daily life for all Australians.					
	Combined weekly reach (%)	Oz TAM Consolidated 28 Day TV Data, GFK Radio Ratings Reach, ABC Corporate Tracking Survey	67%	65%	65%	64%
<b>Why this is important:</b> Reaching all Australians is the key strategic indicator of ABC success. There continues to be increased global competition and market fragmentation; however, the ABC strives to be relevant to all Australians.						
<b>Digital engagement</b>	Third-party digital weekly reach (%)	ABC Corporate Tracking Survey	27%	28%	29%	30%
	<b>Why this is important:</b> The ABC aims to engage audiences on the platforms they prefer.					
	Weekly users across total ABC Web + App	Google Analytics	13.1 million	13.82 million	14.77 million	16.06 million
<b>Digital engagement</b>	Active weekly logged-in users	ABC Active IDS Gigya IDs recorded as Active in SnowPlow	1.89 million	2.30 million	2.86 million	3.72 million
	<b>Why this is important:</b> The ABC of the future must meet audience demand for digital experiences on a wide variety of devices. This measure is tracked with user analysis tools.					

Audience Outcome	Measure	Source	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27
<b>Diversity of content and views</b>	Producing and sharing programs that reflect the cultural diversity of Australia	ABC Corporate Tracking Survey	80%	80%	81%	82%
	<b>Why this is important:</b> Better reflecting the diversity of Australia in its content is an essential part of the ABC's strategic plan.					
<b>Employee Engagement</b>	Employee engagement score (%)	Engagement survey	Achieve Australian benchmark	Achieve Australian benchmark	Achieve Australian benchmark	Achieve Australian benchmark
	<b>Why this is important:</b> Employee engagement surveys provide detailed data and insights for leaders and managers to use to improve the workplace. Organisation responsiveness to employee feedback leads to higher retention rates, lower absenteeism, improved productivity, higher service levels and better employee morale.					
<b>Diversity</b>	Indigenous employees	Employee data	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%
	<b>Why this is important:</b> As Australia's foremost cultural institution, our purpose is to inspire and enrich the lives of all Australians. As the national broadcaster, it is incumbent on the ABC to show leadership in advancing reconciliation.					
	Culturally diverse executives*	Employee data	26%	28%	30%	30%
	Culturally diverse content makers*	Employee data	26%	28%	30%	30%
	Employees with a disability	Employee data	6%	7%	8%	8%
<b>Why this is important:</b> A broad range of perspectives, approaches and ideas makes us a stronger, more creative public broadcaster better able to engage with the Australian community.						

Outer years to be confirmed annually by the Board

\* Targets reflect an updated definition of and calculation of CALD, which align with the Diversity Council of Australia's recommendation for measuring cultural diversity.

In addition to the above KPIs, the ABC continues to track and report on editorial quality, complaints management, access and transmission.

Measure	Source	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27
Editorial Quality	Reviews commissioned or conducted by the ABC	Reviews undertaken and reports considered.	Reviews undertaken and reports considered	Reviews undertaken and reports considered	Reviews undertaken and reports considered
<b>Why this is important:</b> Proper attention to editorial governance and complaints handling is an essential component of the ABC’s commitment to quality editorial content and adherence to the ABC’s Charter and editorial standards.					
Investigation of audience complaints	Data from Ombudsman Office	Complaints investigated and outcomes reported			
<b>Why this is important:</b> Public reporting (where privacy permits) supports the Ombudsman’s commitment to transparency and accountability and serves to focus the objective to resolve complaints wherever it is reasonable to do so.					
Time taken to respond to investigated audience complaints	Data from Ombudsman Office	Average response rate <30 days			
<b>Why this is important:</b> An analysis of response rates can show the efficiency with which the Ombudsman’s Office deals with investigated complaints. While the target is to respond to investigations within 30 days, some investigations will take longer to conclude depending on resources and staff availability.					

Outer years to be confirmed annually by the Board

## Access

Measuring access to ABC platforms provides a quantitative assessment of the ABC’s ability to transmit to Australian audiences – via broadcast or digital services – in keeping with its purpose to provide a comprehensive public broadcasting service.

Measure	Source	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27
Access to analogue radio	Broadcast Australia data	At least 99%	At least 99%	At least 99%	At least 99%
Access to digital radio	Australian Bureau of Statistics data	100%	100%	100%	100%
Access to digital television	Australian Bureau of Statistics data	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Why this is important:</b> Terrestrial and satellite delivered TV and radio services are still the main way Australian audiences access ABC content and these will be maintained over the planning period.					
Audience escalations – transmission issues	Transmission escalation system	Escalations to BAI Communications Australia			
<b>Why this is important:</b> Metrics for escalations of transmission issues are crucial for ensuring transmission issues are rectified to assist the ABC in meeting transmission targets.					

Outer years to be confirmed annually by the Board

## Transmission

Transmission of the ABC’s radio and television content is provided by a third party and managed by the ABC via Transmission Service Agreements. The effective management of these agreements is fundamental to ensuring the ABC reaches and engages with as many Australians as possible.

Measure	Source	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27
Transmission performance	BAI Communications Australia and Regional Broadcasters Australia Holdings Pty Ltd	At least 99% for all services			
<b>Why this is important:</b> The ABC actively monitors the performance of its transmission contracts to maximise the availability of the services provided and to ensure that audiences can engage with ABC content.					
Operation of transmission facilities	BAI Communications Australia and Regional Broadcasters Australia Holdings Pty Ltd	100%	100%	100%	100%

Outer years to be confirmed annually by the Board

Gardening Australia with Costa Georgiadis



# MANAGING OUR RISK

The ABC faces a variety of risks – both threats and opportunities – that may have an impact on its performance, reputation and, more broadly, its social licence to operate. These risks manifest themselves because of the strategic objectives that the ABC seeks to achieve and from the external societal, regulatory, political and market environment in which the ABC operates. Effective management of risk is central to the ABC’s governance, as it enhances opportunities, reduces threats (or exposures) and is critical to delivering the ABC’s objectives.

The ABC’s Board of Directors and management are committed to sustaining a fit-for-purpose risk management framework that both protects and enhances value through the timely and accurate identification, assessment and management of risk.

The risk management framework has as its foundation, a risk policy that aims to embed a culture of risk awareness in all decisions. The objective of the risk management framework is not necessarily to eliminate risk, but rather to manage risk to an appropriate level and generate an outcome that enhances the strategic direction of the ABC.

The ABC uses what is commonly referred to as the “three lines of defence” model for the management and assessment of risk.

The first line of defence is that all ABC employees and operational management own the responsibility for identifying and managing risks within Board-approved limits of authority and expenditure.

The second line of defence is the management and ongoing refinement of the risk framework and the development of efficient and effective internal controls by support functions and management committees.

The third line of defence is the independent assurance by the ABC’s internal audit team (Group Audit) of the efficiency and effectiveness of internal controls relating to key risks.

The appropriateness and effectiveness of the risk management framework is overseen by the ABC Board and the Audit & Risk Committee.

The ABC risk management team is responsible for the continued improvement and refinement of the ABC risk management framework. This includes providing advice and support on how to identify, assess and manage risk.

ABC ME series *WILDLIFERS!* with Rehanna Lunn and Zane Blumeris



## Significant risks

The risk process provides a risk profile of the ABC's most significant risks that, if not managed effectively, could adversely impact the ABC's ability to deliver its strategic objectives and Charter obligations.

**Audience behaviour shifts:** The ABC is operating in a rapidly changing media landscape. Media consumption habits and market fragmentation are impacting the ABC's discoverability and audience reach. Keeping pace with constantly changing platforms and audience behaviours will be challenging as the ABC evolves from an organisation structured around creating content for broadcast platforms to one that will be digital-first in every way.

**Strategic change and innovation:** The ABC is undertaking various initiatives and projects to ensure it remains accessible and relevant to all Australians. The challenge is to effectively implement these initiatives and projects and deliver the organisational change contemplated by the Five-Year Plan.

**Quality Australian content:** There are inflationary pressures on Australian production costs and strong competition for screen agency funding to support the financing of Australian content. As competition for local content amplifies, so will industry demand for both talent and production staff.

**Access to high quality news & information:** The ABC operates in an environment of declining news consumption and reduced trust in news outlets. This is impacting the way the ABC works to provide news and information that is accurate, impartial, accessible, and relevant to audiences.

**Reputation and trust:** The ABC is among the most prominent and most discussed brands in the country. At any time, ABC activities can generate public and media attention. The ABC works to retain the trust and support of all Australians.

**Financial & Corporate Stewardship** To implement its strategy, the ABC will need to maintain a strong financial position, effectively managing funding and operating cost pressures, while also meeting the challenges of a strong environmental, social and governance change agenda.

**Workforce capability and management:** The attraction, development and retention of a skilled, diverse and innovative workforce is required to deliver current services and transition with the changing media and technology environment.

**Cyber security:** There are challenges in ensuring the robustness of the ABC's cyber defences and responses, in a landscape of evolving threats that have the potential to significantly disrupt operations and impact the integrity or availability of the ABC's services and data.

**Workplace health and safety:** The ABC can face challenging situations and environments when collecting content. The ABC works to mitigate risks to health, safety, security and wellbeing of our people and the public as low as reasonably practicable.

**Broadcast and digital interruption:** Technology maintenance, complexity and interfaces raise the potential for interruption to broadcast and digital services. The ABC works to provide a resilient service across all distribution channels, preventing and minimising the impact of disruptions.

**Compliance:** Contractual and regulatory requirements and expectations are constantly changing, impacting the way the ABC works.

# DISCLAIMER

*This Plan contains various long-range plans, high-level estimates and other forward-looking information (Projections). Those Projections are based on the best-considered professional assessment of present economic and operating conditions, present Australian Government policy, and a number of assumptions regarding future events and actions which at the date of this document, are expected to take place.*



Award-winning children's program *Bluey*. Credit: Ludo Studios.



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