



ABC  
Australian  
Broadcasting  
Corporation

connect

Annual Report 2009



engage

**Redefining the town square**

belong

improve

support



Once, the town square was a place where people gathered to talk and exchange ideas.

Now, the ABC is redefining the town square as a world of greater opportunities: a world where Australians can engage with one another and explore the ideas and events that are shaping our communities, our nation and beyond. A world where people can come to speak and be heard, to listen and learn from each other.

Sarah, Victoria and Amy love taking time out from study to catch up on all the latest. Whether it's watching last night's episode of *The Chaser*, downloading a *triple j* pod or vod, or grabbing a movie review on ABC Mobile, wherever they are, the ABC is their town square.

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Radio—**8 760** radio hours on each network and station.

Television—total of **14 965** television hours across ABC1 and ABC2.

**4.8 million** pages of content on ABC Online.

ABC services reach an estimated **73%** of all Australians each week via Television, Radio and Online.

ABC Radio had a five-city weekly reach of **four million** or **34%**.

ABC1 had a weekly metropolitan reach of **8.34 million** or **57.9%** and weekly regional reach of **4.01 million** or **60.9%**.

Total ABC Television (ABC1 + ABC2) had a weekly metropolitan reach of **8.54 million** or **59.3%** and weekly regional reach of **4.08 million** or **62.0%**.

ABC Online had an average monthly reach of **19%** of Australia's active internet population.

More than **19 million** podcast downloads and **four million** vodcast downloads in the six months to June 2009.

Weeknight *7pm News* on ABC1 averaged an audience of **1.05 million** people.



2008-09 AT

Radio Australia programming available through local rebroadcasts in **Asia** and the **Pacific**, shortwave broadcasts, satellite services and **16** 24-hour FM relays.

Australia Network television available in 44 countries, reaching **22 million** homes and with a measured monthly audience of around **two million** viewers.

ABC1 broadcast **1 081** hours of first-release Australian television content.

ABC's digital television services can reach **97.7%** of Australia's population from **324** transmitter locations.

**43** ABC Shops and **117** ABC Centres throughout Australia.

ABC Commercial generated **\$18.8 million** net profit in 2008–09 which was returned to programming.

**89%** of Australians continue to believe the ABC provides a valuable service to the community.

**83%** of Australians believe the ABC does a good job covering country/regional issues.

**72%** of Australians believe the ABC is efficient and well-managed.

The ABC had total revenues of **\$1 084 million** from ordinary activities with **\$1 225 million** in total assets.



# A GLANCE



## Radio ●

The ABC has four national radio networks—ABC Radio National, ABC Classic FM, *triple j* and ABC NewsRadio—as well as 60 Local Radio stations around Australia, and three internet music-based services, *dig*, *dig jazz* and *dig country*. *dig* and *dig jazz* are also available on free-to-air digital and subscription television platforms.

## Television ■

ABC1 is a national service with State and Territory news breakouts. It is available nationally in analog and on free-to-air digital and subscription television platforms.

ABC2 is a digital-only television service, available on free-to-air and subscription platforms.

iView ([abc.net.au/iview](http://abc.net.au/iview)) is a free internet-only television-on-demand service providing a range of programs.

## Online ▼

The ABC Online website provides nearly five million pages, including content available via streaming, podcasting, vodcasting and video-on-demand and content uniquely designed for broadband delivery. ABC services are also available via WAP, SMS, 3G and other wireless platforms.

## Shops

ABC-related products are available from 43 ABC Shops and 117 ABC Centres throughout Australia, as well as the ABC Shop Online and an order-based Customer Delivery Service.

## International Broadcasting

International radio service, Radio Australia, is available by shortwave, satellite and terrestrial rebroadcast arrangements in Asia and the Pacific.

International television and online service, Australia Network, is available via satellite and terrestrial rebroadcast arrangements in Asia and the Pacific.

## Transmission information

ABC Television (Appendix 22)

ABC Radio (Appendix 23)

Radio Australia (Appendix 24)

Australia Network (Appendix 25)



# THE NATIONAL BROAD



• Darwin ● ◻ ▽  
• Katherine ● ▽

• Cairns ● ▽

• Townsville ● ▽

• Mackay ● ▽

• Mt Isa ● ▽

• Rockhampton ● ◻ ▽  
• Gladstone ● ▽

• Longreach ● ▽

• Bundaberg ● ▽

• Alice Springs ● ▽

• Toowoomba ● ▽

• Maroochydore ● ▽  
• Brisbane ● ◻ ▽  
• Gold Coast ● ▽  
• Lismore ● ▽

• Broken Hill ● ▽

• Coffs Harbour ● ▽

• Tamworth ● ▽

• Port Macquarie ● ▽

• Dubbo ● ▽

• Muswellbrook ● ▽

• Pt Augusta ● ▽

• Pt Pirie ● ▽

• Newcastle ● ▽

• Renmark ● ▽

• Mildura ● ▽

• Orange ● ▽

• Erina ● ▽

• Pt Lincoln ● ▽

• Sydney ● ◻ ▽  
• Wollongong ● ▽

• Adelaide ● ◻ ▽

• Wagga Wagga ● ▽

• Canberra ● ◻ ▽

• Nowra ● ▽

• Horsham ● ▽

• Shepparton ● ▽

• Wodonga ● ▽

• Bendigo ● ▽

• Mt Gambier ● ▽

• Ballarat ● ▽

• Melbourne ● ◻ ▽

• Bega ● ▽

• Warrnambool ● ▽

• Sale ● ▽

• Morwell ● ▽

• Burnie ● ▽

• Launceston ● ◻ ▽

• Hobart ● ◻ ▽

# CASTER



**ABC**  
Australian  
Broadcasting  
Corporation

**Office of  
Maurice L. Newman AC  
Chairman**

ABC Ultimo Centre  
700 Harris Street  
Ultimo NSW 2007  
Australia

GPO Box 9994  
Sydney NSW 2001

Tel. +61 2 8333 5363  
Fax. +61 2 8333 2967  
abc.net.au

5 October 2009

Senator The Hon. Stephen Conroy  
Minister for Broadband, Communications  
and the Digital Economy  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister,

The Board of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation is pleased to present the Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2009.

The Report is prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997* and the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation Act 1983*.

It provides a comprehensive review of the ABC's performance in relation to its legislative mandate and as a diversified media enterprise operating within a fast-evolving industry environment. This year's editorial theme of the report—*Redefining the Town Square*—reflects the ABC's role as a facilitator of Australia's national conversation, and the innovative ways in which the Corporation is hosting that conversation.

Yours sincerely

MAURICE L NEWMAN AC  
Chairman



# Corporate Report

## Our Vision is

to be trusted for playing a meaningful role in the lives of all Australians.

## Our Role is

to uphold the ABC's Charter by connecting with audiences through distinctive content that informs, educates and entertains.

## Our Values

The ABC is a truly independent media organisation for all Australians. Our values are the foundation of how we work.

**Integrity**—We act with trustworthiness, honesty and fairness. We deliver on our commitments and are accountable.

**Respect**—We treat our audiences and each other with consideration and dignity. We embrace diversity.

**Collegiality**—We work together willingly. We cooperate and share in the ABC's challenges and successes.

**Innovation**—We foster creativity and distinctiveness. We encourage new thinking and strive to achieve quality in all that we do.



# Corporate Plan Summary

THE ABC CORPORATE PLAN for the 2007–10 period is structured to reflect four key dimensions of activity: good corporate governance; content delivery and the ABC’s relationship with audiences; the value for money the Corporation provides to the Australian community; and the organisation’s commitment to learning and growth. The Plan is framed around four Corporate Objectives derived explicitly from the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation Act 1983*, including the Charter (s6).

Specific legislative responsibilities are addressed through the strategic priorities and actions identified in support of these four overall objectives.

## Objective 1—Good Governance

**Ensure the ABC’s independence, integrity and high standards (s6(1)(a); s8(1)(b)).**

Meeting its legislative obligations to...

- Ensure news and information is accurate and impartial (s8(1)(c))
- Develop codes of practice relating to programs (s8(1)(e))
- Take account of standards determined by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (s6(2)(a)(iii))
- Comply with all relevant legislation (s8(1)(d))
- Give consideration to any policy statement by the Commonwealth on any matter relevant to broadcasting or administration (s8(2)).

Detailed reporting against Objective 1 can be found on page 121.

## Objective 2—Output and Audiences

**To be recognised as the leading Australian public media space where people engage with issues and ideas.**

Meeting its legislative obligations to...

- Contribute to a sense of national identity (s6(1)(a)(i))
- Engage audiences with comprehensive and innovative programs and services (s6(1)(a)); s6(2)(a)(iii); programs of wide appeal and specialised interest (s6(2)(a)(iii))
- Content genre: News and information (s6(1)(b); s8(1)(c)); programs of an educational nature (s6(1)(a)(i)); promotion of the musical, dramatic

and other performing arts (s6(1)(c)); reflect cultural diversity (s6(1)(a)(ii))

- Transmit overseas programs of news, current affairs, entertainment and cultural enrichment (s6(1)(b))
- Take account of the multicultural character of the Australian community (s6(2)(a)(iv))
- Take account of services provided by the commercial and community broadcasting sectors (s6(2)(a)(i)).

Detailed reporting against Objective 2 can be found on page 122.

## Objective 3—Value for Money

**Deliver maximum benefit to the people of Australia through the effective and efficient delivery of ABC services.**

Meeting its legislative obligations to...

- Provide maximum benefit to the people of Australia (s8(1)(a))
- Ensure the functions of the Corporation are performed efficiently and with the maximum benefit to the people of Australia (s8(1)(a))
- Determine charges payable with a view to raising as much net revenue as is practicable, having regard to the proper performance of the (the ABC’s) functions (s29(2)).

Detailed reporting against Objective 3 can be found on page 124.

## Objective 4—Learning and Growth

**Sustain and grow the ABC through high-quality leadership and an environment of responsibility and opportunity.**

- The Managing Director is responsible for ensuring the Corporation (makes) as efficient and economical use of the services of its employees as is practicable (s50(1)(a)).

Detailed reporting against Objective 4 can be found on page 126.

## Measures of Community Satisfaction

The following measures apply to the Corporate Plan in its entirety and reflect community perceptions and beliefs about the value of the ABC's contribution to Australian society as measured by the annual *Newspoll ABC Appreciation Survey*.

	2008-09	2007-08	2006-07	2005-06	2004-05
<b>Standards will be measured by...</b>					
% of people who believe the ABC provides quality programming	82	82	81	80	80
Television	69	65	64	63	63
Radio	89	91	88	89	89
Online (among ABC Online users)					
% of people who believe the ABC is balanced and even-handed when reporting news and current affairs	83	81	79	83	82
<b>Community Standards will be measured by...</b>					
% of people who value the ABC and its services to the community	89	88	89	90	90
<b>Charter Services will be measured by...</b>					
% of people who regard the ABC to be distinctively Australian and contributing to Australia's national identity	86	84	84	84	84
% of people who believe the ABC reflects the cultural diversity of the Australian community	83	80	81	81	82
% of people who consider the ABC:					
• encourages and promotes Australian performing arts such as music and drama	83	82	80	79	78
• provides programs of an educational nature	88	86	85	86	85
• provides an appropriate mix of news and topical information					
	On 21 out of 22 issues listed in the 2009 ABC Appreciation Survey, 50% or more of ABC news and current affairs audiences believed the ABC had about the right amount of coverage (based on people who use the ABC for news and current affairs at least once per fortnight). This is comparable to the 2008 survey. In 2009 the one issue where less than 50% believed the amount of coverage was about right was local politics/government. In 2008 the results were also 21 out of 22, and in both 2007 and 2006 they were 20 out of 22.				
• achieves a good balance between programs of wide appeal and specialised interest	86	83	85	84	84
% of people who perceive the ABC to be innovative	75	73	72	73	74
<b>Value for Money will be measured by...</b>					
% of people who believe the ABC is efficient and well managed	72	69	71	70	70

# ABC Board of Directors

**The role and responsibilities** of the ABC Board derive from the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation Act 1983* ("ABC Act"). Section 8 of the ABC Act requires the Board to ensure the functions of the Corporation are performed efficiently and with the maximum benefit to the people of Australia, while maintaining the ABC's independence and integrity. It is required to ensure that the gathering and presentation of news and information is accurate and impartial according to the recognised standards of objective journalism; to develop codes of practice relating to programming matters; to ensure compliance with the ABC Act and other relevant legislation; and to consider matters of Government policy relevant to the functions of the Corporation when requested to do so by the Minister. The ABC Act also requires the Board to prepare corporate plans for the ABC and to notify the Minister of any matters likely to cause significant deviation from those plans.

In addition, the Board is subject to further obligations and individual Directors are required to meet objective standards of care and good faith, as set out in the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997*.

Directors are required to observe the ABC Board Protocol, first adopted in September 2004, which sets out their responsibilities and rights. They are required to provide a declaration of interests upon their appointment, which is updated as necessary. At each meeting, Directors are asked if they wish to declare a material personal interest in any items on the agenda. Induction processes are in place for new Board members and online training is available through provision of the Directors' Manual and Corporate Governance in Australia modules from CCH Australia Limited. Other professional development for Directors is provided on an "as required" basis.

| Maurice Newman AC *Chairman* | Janet Albrechtsen | Peter Hurley | Michael Lynch CBE AM



## Maurice Newman AC

**Appointed Chairman  
for a five-year term from 1 January 2007.**

Maurice Newman retired as Chairman of the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX Limited) on 24 September 2008.

His career spans 40 years in stockbroking and investment banking, including as Managing Director in 1984, and Executive Chairman from 1985 until 1999, of what is now the Deutsche Bank Group in Australia. He was Chairman of the Deutsche Bank Asia Pacific Advisory Board and a Director of Deutsche Bank Asia Pacific from 1999 to 2001. He was also Chairman of Deutsche Asset Management (Australia) Limited from 1997 until 2000. Mr Newman retired from Deutsche Bank in July 2001.

Mr Newman has chaired a number of Asian business alliances including the East Asia and Oceania Stock Exchange Federation, and the Australia Taiwan Business Council.

He has been an adviser to Australian governments, as a member of the Consultative Committee on Relations with Japan (1984–87); a Commissioner of the National Commission of Audit (1996); a member of the Business Advisory Panel established by the Minister for Multicultural

Affairs (1997–2002); Chairman of the National Judging Panel for Innovation in Local Government (1997–98); Chairman of the Commonwealth Government's National Year 2000 Steering Committee (1997–2000); the Business Mature Age Workforce Advisory Group (2000–01); Co-Chair of the Singapore Australia Business Alliance Forum (1999–2002); Chairman of the Federal Treasurer's Financial Sector Advisory Council (1998–2007); Member of the New South Wales Premier's Major Events Board (2002–04); Chairman of the Sydney Convention and Visitors Bureau (2001–07); and Chairman of Tourism New South Wales (2002–07).

In 1997, he was Australia's Private Sector Representative to the First Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting Business Forum held in London; and in 1999 led a delegation of senior Australian executives to New York promoting "Australia, the Dynamic Success Story of the Asia Pacific—A Centre for Global Financial Services".

Mr Newman was the Chairman of Acrux Limited (1999–2003); Chairman of the Sydney Legacy Citizen's Committee (1998–2004); Member of the Advisory Committee of Australasian Medical Insurance Ltd (January to August 2003); Member of the Advisory Council of the Asia Society AustralAsia Centre (2001–04); Member of the Business Council of Australia's Chairmen's Panel

| Dr Julianne Schultz AM

| Mark Scott

| Steven Skala

| Keith Windschuttle





“Australians prize the ABC for being a reliable, impartial and honest voice—  
and their trust is the basis of the Corporation’s present and future relevance.

(2003–07); and Civil Patron, Royal Australian Naval Reserves, Professional Studies Program (2005–09).

He served as Chancellor of Macquarie University from 2002 to February 2008 and as a Director of the ABC from 2000 to 2004.

In 2002, Mr Newman was appointed an Adviser to the Marsh Group of Companies. In June 2004, he was appointed a Director of the Queensland Investment Corporation.

Mr Newman is Honorary Chair of the Macquarie University Foundation; Chairman of The Australian Father’s Day Council; Chairman of The Taronga Foundation; and a Patron of CEDA.

Mr Newman was awarded a Companion of the Order of Australia, AC in 2002, and an Order of Australia, AM in 1994. In 1999, Mr Newman was awarded the Economic Medal First Class by Taiwan’s Ministry of Economic Affairs for services to Australia-Taiwan relations; in 2001, the AustCham Singapore President’s Medal for services to Australia-Singapore relations; and in 2002, was made an Honorary Life Member and Fellow of the Security and Derivatives Industry Association (SDIA). In 2003, he was awarded the Centenary Medal for outstanding service to the financial services industry.

In April 2009, Mr Newman was awarded a Doctor of Business *honoris causa* from Macquarie University.

### **Janet Albrechtsen**

**Appointed a Director  
for a five-year term from 24 February 2005.**

Janet Albrechtsen, a former solicitor, is a columnist with *The Australian* newspaper. She has also written for *The Wall Street Journal Asia*, *The Australian Financial Review*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Age*, *The Sunday Age* and other publications.

She was previously employed with law firm Freehill, Hollingdale and Page, practicing in the

areas of banking and finance, corporate and securities law.

Ms Albrechtsen has a doctorate in law from the University of Sydney Law School and has taught at the University of Sydney Law School.

### **Peter Hurley**

**Appointed a Director  
for a five-year term from 14 June 2006.**

Peter Hurley is a businessman in the hotels industry. He is currently National Senior Vice-President of the Australian Hotels Association, State President of the Australian Hotels Association (South Australia) and Chairman of Hospitality Group Training, the largest group apprenticeship and training scheme in South Australia. Mr Hurley is a foundation Board Member of the Independent Gaming Corporation and Deputy Chair since 1994. He is also Deputy Chairman of The Adelaide Football Club.

Mr Hurley has previously served as a Board Member (1997–2003) and Chair of the Audit Committee of the South Australian Tourism Commission, and as a Board Member of the Australian Tourist Commission (2000–04).

### **Michael Lynch CBE AM**

**Appointed a Director  
for a five-year term from 27 March 2009.**

From 2002–09, Michael Lynch was Chief Executive of London’s Southbank Centre which incorporates Royal Festival Hall, the Hayward Gallery, Queen Elizabeth Hall, the Purcell Room and Jubilee Gardens. During his time in London he was responsible for the major renovation of Royal Festival Hall and the transformation of the Southbank cultural precinct.

Previously, Mr Lynch had a long career in arts administration in Australia. He was Chief Executive of the Sydney Opera House from 1998–2002, and General Manager of the Australia Council from 1994–98. Prior to that he was General Manager of the Sydney Theatre Company.

The Board is committed to servicing that trust and maintaining the integrity of the ABC.”

In his earlier working life he was a casting director with his own agency Forcast, and an agent for the performing arts and film and television. He began his career at the Australia Council for the Arts in 1973 and was a former manager of the Nimrod Theatre and Administrator of the Australian National Playwrights Conference.

In 2001 he was awarded the Order of Australia, AM in the Queen’s Birthday Honours for services to arts administration. In 2008 he was named a Commander of the British Empire, CBE for services to the arts in the United Kingdom. Mr Lynch returned to Australia in 2009.

### **Dr Julianne Schultz AM**

**Appointed a Director  
for a five-year term from 27 March 2009.**

Dr Julianne Schultz is the founding editor of *Griffith REVIEW*, the award-winning literary and public affairs quarterly established by Griffith University in 2003 to provide public, intellectual leadership and a platform for long-form essays addressing topical issues beyond the daily news agenda.

Julianne is a professor at Griffith’s Centre for Public Culture and Ideas. She received her doctorate from the University of Sydney and is the author or editor of more than 20 books including *Reviving the Fourth Estate* (Cambridge University Press); *Steel City Blues* (Penguin); *Not Just Another Business* (Pluto), co-author of *The Phone Book* (Penguin) and numerous chapters on journalism and media practice.

Julianne began her career as a reporter with the ABC and the *Australian Financial Review*. She has held senior editorial roles and worked as media columnist and Director of Corporate and Digital Strategy. She was the founding director of the Australian Centre for Independent Journalism and actively involved in research and discussion about the future of journalism and its role in public life. Her doctorate from the University of Sydney explored the contemporary relevance of the fourth estate to the practice of journalism in Australia.

### **Mark Scott**

**Appointed Managing Director  
for a five-year term from 5 July 2006.**

Prior to his appointment as ABC Managing Director, Mark Scott spent almost 12 years in a variety of editorial and executive positions with John Fairfax Publications. From 2003–05 he was Editor-in-Chief, Metropolitan newspapers, and during 2005 became Editor-in-Chief of Metropolitan, Regional and Community newspapers. From November 2005 he was Editorial Director, with responsibility for the management and editorial direction of the newspaper divisions and websites along with the editorial and commercial performance of the Fairfax newspaper magazine division.

Mr Scott holds a Bachelor of Arts, Diploma in Education and a Master of Arts degree in Government from the University of Sydney. During 1992–93 he completed a Masters degree in Public Administration at Harvard University.

### **Steven Skala**

**Appointed a Director  
for a five-year term from 6 October 2005.**

Steven Skala is Vice-Chairman, Australia and New Zealand of Deutsche Bank AG. He is a Director and former Chairman of Hexima Limited, a Director of Deutsche Australia Limited, Max Capital Group Ltd, Wilson HTM Investment Group Limited, The Australian Ballet and the Centre for Independent Studies.

Mr Skala serves as Vice-President of The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research and as a Trustee of the Sir Zelman Cowen Cancer Foundation. In addition, he is a member of the International Council of The Museum of Modern Art (New York), the Grievance Tribunal of Cricket Australia, The Global Foundation and the Advisory Council of the Australian Innovation Research Centre.

Mr Skala was Chairman of Film Australia Limited until its recent merger into Screen Australia, is the immediate past Chairman of the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, and was a Director of the Channel 10 Group of Companies and The King Island Company Limited. Between 1985 and 2004, he was a partner of Arnold Bloch Leibler, Solicitors and head of its corporate and commercial practice.

### Keith Windschuttle

**Appointed a Director  
for a five-year term from 14 June 2006.**

Mr Keith Windschuttle is an historian, author, editor and publisher. He is the editor of *Quadrant* magazine and the publisher of Macleay Press. He began his career as a journalist and remains a frequent contributor to major Australian and international newspapers, international journals and academic publications. He has written eight books on Australian history, journalism and the media. For 20 years he was a lecturer in Australian history, journalism and social policy at a number of Australian universities. He has also been a visiting and guest lecturer at a number of universities in the United States.

# Board Directors'

## Securing the ABC's Future

A key focus of the Board in 2008–09 was securing adequate funding for the ABC for the next triennium, 2009–12. It was rewarded in the May 2009 Federal Budget, which allocated the Corporation an additional \$165 million over three years, the single largest funding increase since the ABC was incorporated in 1983.

The 2009–12 triennial funding agreement is critical to the Corporation's growth and renewal not just over the next three years, but throughout the decade ahead. By 2012, when the agreement concludes, the ABC will be in its 80th year.

Board directors were active in communicating the ABC's case to Parliamentary representatives and the ABC's varied constituencies throughout the year. The Government has acknowledged the role played by both the Australia 2020 Summit and the many public submissions made to the discussion paper *ABC and SBS: Towards a Digital Future* in shaping funding decisions. The ABC is indebted to all those Australians—audience members, artists, actors and creative industry groups—whose support for the ABC contributed to the historic funding increase.

In recognising both the gravity of the economic conditions in which the Budget was framed, and the many competing priorities for Government spending, the Board would like to place on record its appreciation for this significant increase in ABC funding.

While the Budget clearly aspired to secure Australia's economic prosperity, the investment of funds in the ABC ensures Australia's civic and cultural prosperity will also be protected.

The ABC is ideally positioned to continue its present work and to deliver new benefits to the Australian public as opportunities emerge, and its long contribution to nation-building will continue.

# Statement

## A New Television Landscape

Television has now been shaping our appreciation of the Australian experience for over 50 years. Without Australian content on television, Australia's unique culture would have been slow to develop, and the culture itself less distinctive than it is today.

The ABC has long provided quality Australian television programming that helped reflect and shape Australia's sense of cultural identity. Through ABC2, it has successfully positioned itself in the digital television environment, offering a diversity of content to an increasingly diverse audience.

One of the catalytic effects of the additional funding provided in the 2009–12 triennial funding agreement is the ability for the ABC to continue this culturally-significant work by investing further in both drama and children's content.

The planned children's channel ABC3, scheduled to launch by December 2009, will help shape a strong sense of Australian identity for the next generation. Dedicated to Australian school-age children, ABC3 will be accessible beyond television, through a range of digital technologies, and will feature social interactivity, games, video and user-generated content online.

*The Australian Broadcasting Corporation Act 1983* ("ABC Act") demands that "the Corporation shall take account of the broadcasting and television services provided by the commercial and public sectors of the Australian broadcasting and television system." Due to high production costs, investment in Australian drama is increasingly a challenge for Australia's commercial television services. It represents a greater risk than other forms of content, such as reality television, which is able to deliver similar size audiences at lower cost. In such a market and in these economic times, it increasingly falls to the ABC to ensure that a choice of free, quality Australian content remains open to all Australians.

While the range of channels available through digital television will increase, the growth of internet television (IPTV) channels, along with the proposed National Broadband Network, will also see broadband become more widely used to bring television into the home.

The ABC is already preparing for the fundamental transformation that will result. Its pioneering iView service, launched in July 2008, is already demonstrating the potential of IPTV for Australian audiences.

## Increased Opportunities for Regional Australia

The first stages of the rollout of the National Broadband Network will commence in Tasmania in 2009, with services expected to be available in 2010. Meanwhile, the growing use of broadband continues to bring a new dimension to Australian citizenship and community life. As the ability to contribute content becomes easier and faster, the nature and extent of the ABC's collaboration with its audiences will inevitably increase.

Over the past year, the ABC has responded to this growing public interest in creating and sharing content, gradually evolving beyond the public broadcasting model to become a more open public access media organisation. This emerging pattern of media use has effectively established the ABC as a "town square", where anyone can participate in the Australian conversation, and where the notion of community is not restricted to where you live.

The sense of participation and connection that the ABC has successfully developed with its audiences for many years is being given new life through new technology. \$15.3 million of the new funding will be applied to developing Regional Multimedia Centres based on existing ABC regional radio sites. These centres will deliver more locally-focused information, feature more content from audiences and provide online tutorials and tools for staff and the community that will make it easier for audiences to contribute and participate.

"The ABC is ideally positioned to continue its present work and  
to deliver new benefits to the Australian public as opportunities

### **Safeguarding Trust: Review of ABC Self-Regulation Framework**

The Corporation has also strived to ensure that the values that have helped build its reputation and brand over the course of three-quarters of a century of Australian life have been safeguarded and preserved.

With so many sources of news now available, with varying degrees of reliability, the ability to trust the information provided by the ABC is even more critical. Australians prize the ABC for being a reliable, impartial and honest voice—and their trust is the basis of the Corporation's present and future relevance. The Board is committed to serving that trust and maintaining the integrity of the ABC.

In that spirit, the Chairman, Maurice Newman, and Director of Editorial Policies, Paul Chadwick, undertook a review of the ABC's self-regulatory processes. During the course of the review the Director of Editorial Policies consulted widely, both within and outside the ABC. The review was completed by 30 June, with implementation which includes intensive training expected during 2009–10. It will be a valuable contribution to the continuous improvement of the ABC's editorial standards and the ways in which it handles any lapse in those standards.

Under the ABC Act, the Board is responsible for ensuring that the Corporation's news and information is accurate and impartial according to recognised standards of objective journalism. To this end, quality assurance projects assessing ABC editorial content were conducted throughout the year. The projects were designed after consultation with academic specialists, similar public media organisations and corporate bodies. In the interests of full transparency, all results were published on the ABC *Editorial Policies* website.

Further, to ensure these projects were as effective as possible, independent reviews of three pilot quality assurance projects were commissioned. The reviews were conducted by Ms Kerry Blackburn, an experienced journalist and Editorial Adviser to the BBC Trust, and by one of Australia's leading media scholars, Professor Rod Tiffin of the Department of Government and International Relations at the University of Sydney. Each review revealed potential for improving the methodology, design and execution of the projects and for refinements of the ABC's *Editorial Policies*. These are also published on the ABC *Editorial Policies* site.

### **Continually Improving Efficiency**

The Corporation's argument for additional funding for the next triennium was made more effective by demonstrating that existing funds were being efficiently used to provide the maximum possible benefit to the Australian people.

The Production Review, commenced in 2007, generated savings which were used to begin production of *News Breakfast*, a new three-hour live program on ABC2, in November 2008.

In a further initiative aimed at improving efficiency, the Board approved the creation of a new television presentation system, in partnership with WIN TV. The new system will allow the ABC to offer state-specific versions of all of its television services and provide breaking news and emergency coverage into any region around the clock. The new distribution system will generate savings for investment in future ABC television production.

The Board also approved the acquisition of a new site to house the ABC's Brisbane operations and staff. The purpose-built accommodation will be in the hub of the city's arts and cultural centre at the South Bank. An environmentally-responsible and sustainable building is scheduled for completion in late 2011.



emerge, and its long contribution to nation building will continue.”

## Welcome to new Board Members

The Board welcomes new Directors Michael Lynch CBE AM and Dr Julianne Schultz AM who were appointed on the recommendation of the Government’s new Nominations Panel. Both Directors bring a depth and range of expertise and the Board looks forward to their future contributions in helping fulfil its duties under the ABC Act.

## International Broadcasting and International Relations

Throughout the year, the ABC continued to represent Australia to the world through the diversity of content on Radio Australia and Australia Network and through the nation-building work commissioned by International Projects. By helping to develop a better understanding of Australia internationally, they have continued to play a strategically-important public diplomacy role throughout the year.

Despite increasing fragmentation of international television audiences, Australia Network has grown its audience in key markets such as India. Radio Australia has developed further partnership and rebroadcasting arrangements to ensure its services become even more widely available. Through the Pacific Media Assistance Scheme (PACMAS), ABC International Projects continued to extend its range of grassroots level projects in Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and other areas of the Pacific.

The creation in November 2008 of the 24-hour Asia Pacific News Centre in Melbourne, which combined the editorial expertise of Radio Australia, Australia Network and their online services, was a significant milestone in strengthening and improving the ABC’s international services in an increasingly competitive environment.

In October 2008, the ABC celebrated the 35th anniversary of its Beijing bureau. As the only media organisation to have broadcast from China for that length of time, the ABC has been privileged to report the epic changes that have taken place in Chinese society, economy and government over that period.

## Emergency Services Broadcasting

During the year, as the nation’s emergency services broadcaster, the ABC was often called upon to provide up-to-the-minute, reliable and sometimes life-saving information.

The Board would like to express its gratitude and pay particular tribute to ABC staff for their outstanding work during the Victorian bushfires in February and March 2009.

Because the stakes had never been higher, and to get the job done, staff suspended their routines, rearranged their home lives and worked around the clock—the impact of which was then also felt by partners, spouses and children. The Board also therefore thanks those people who stood behind ABC staff.

Much was asked, and much was given, and the work was intensely demanding, both physically and emotionally.

This was difficult, unprecedented work, from which lessons were learned that will help the ABC continue to improve this vital service, and better fulfil its responsibility as the nation’s emergency services broadcaster.

The Board has throughout the year maintained an active oversight role across ABC operations and accountabilities, to ensure the ABC performs efficiently and with maximum benefit to the people of Australia as required under Section 8 of the ABC Act.

# ABC Advisory Council

The ABC Advisory Council was established in 1983 under the provisions of Section 11 of the ABC Act to provide advice to the Board on matters relating to the Corporation's broadcasting programs.

## **Back row**

Jaime Phillips  
Moira Neagle  
Joshua Knackstredt  
Anthony Peters  
Joel Buchholz  
Geoffrey Cadogan-Cowper  
Catherine Prosser

## **Front row**

Craig Wallace  
Jane Munro (Convenor)  
Rosemary Redgen  
Joanne Roach

## **Absent**

Victoria Shenstone

The ABC Board appoints the 12 members of the Council for a period of up to four years. Applications to join the Council are invited through promotions on ABC Radio, Television and Online and advertisements in the press in September and October each year.

The members of the Advisory Council for 2008–09 are from each State and Territory and they bring to discussions a wide range of experience and perspectives, as well as consultation with the communities they represent.

The Council is made up of:

### **Dr Jane Munro, Convenor** (Melbourne, Vic)

Dr Munro is Head of International House at the University of Melbourne. Her background is in Asian language study. She has been a teaching fellow at Harvard University and a Board Member of the Melbourne Festival, Opera Australia and The Victorian Women's Council.

### **Mr Joel Buchholz** (Kirwan, Qld)

Mr Buchholz is Deputy Principal of Kirwan State High School. Joel has a great interest in current affairs and entertainment programming and is keen to engage in community discussion—in particular, about current affairs, the arts and education. Joel sees his time on the Council as a way to exploit the potential for the ABC to broaden the focus on the gap between children's programming and programs aimed at older audiences.



**Mr Geoffrey Cadogan-Cowper** (Ross, Tas)

Mr Cadogan-Cowper is a Volunteer Ambulance Officer, a Trustee (Director) of the Tasmanian Wool Centre and Chair of Tasmania's Heritage Highway Tourism Association. He is interested in science, history and public affairs, as well as the arts, specifically music and visual arts.

**Mr Joshua Knackstredt** (Cammeray, NSW)

Mr Knackstredt graduated with a combined Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Laws from Macquarie University in early 2005. He is currently practising as a barrister at Seven Wentworth Chambers and previously worked as a solicitor at Clayton Utz. He is also the Vice President of NSW Young Lawyers, a division of the Law Society of New South Wales. In addition to the law, he is interested in politics, international affairs and the world of music.

**Ms Moira Neagle** (Millicent, SA)

Ms Neagle is an Assistant Principal of a government Primary School. Rosemary is a mother of two, farmer's wife, daughter of an ageing mother, an educator and involved community member. Her special interests are gardening, reading, playing the piano, forming opinions about current affairs and debating these with others. Ms Neagle, a poet, published *In My Garden of Words* in 2007.

**Mr Anthony Peters** (Sydney, NSW)

Mr Peters is a former farmer and grazier from the central western region of New South Wales. Being a member of various Boards and advisory groups has given Anthony a deep understanding of regional issues. Amongst his interests in ABC programming are health and community welfare, news and documentaries and he also regularly accesses rural affairs on ABC Online.

**Ms Jaime Phillips** (Perth, WA)

Ms Phillips' career has taken her to regional communities across WA. She has worked on leadership and capacity building programs involving culturally diverse groups. As a professional historian Jaime has researched Australia's regional, environmental and corporate history. She is employed at FORM, an industry liaison group aimed at developing Western Australia as a "state of creativity".

**Ms Catherine Prosser** (Narrabundah, ACT)

Ms Prosser works in theatre production and design. Catherine sees her role on the Council as an opportunity to encourage people to be actively involved in shaping media. Her interests in ABC programming are Local Radio, Classic FM, NewsRadio and Television programs: *Catalyst*; *Australian Story*; *Spicks and Specks*; and *The Einstein Factor*.

**Ms Rosemary Redgen** (Nhulunbuy, NT)

Ms Redgen is an administration trainer at remote Aboriginal community clinics for the Northern Territory Health Department. She was a voluntary member of the Consumer Affairs Council, talking to remote Aboriginal community councils, before they were disbanded. Previously, Ms Redgen worked for a multi-national company in Melbourne and employed market research companies, interpreting and reporting on their findings.

**Ms Joanne Roach** (Kununurra, WA)

Ms Roach is a Community Librarian. As a member of a remote regional community, she has first-hand knowledge of the importance of access to quality free-to-air programming for non-urban Australians. Good quality drama, history and documentaries (particularly social sciences and environmental issues) are areas where she has a special interest.

**Miss Victoria Shenstone** (Kenmore, Qld)

Miss Shenstone is a Senior Commercial Consultant with RISC Pty Ltd, an international consulting firm to the oil and gas industry. Victoria consults to both Australian junior gas exploration and development companies and international oil companies in areas of coal-seam gas resource economics and project management. She has a special interest in rural economic and energy affairs throughout western Queensland and Australia.

**Mr Craig Wallace** (Fisher, ACT)

Mr Wallace is a public servant from Canberra who works with the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and has also been a community leader with various Canberra organisations for more than a decade. Craig is a past Chair of the ACT Disability Advisory Council and was President of the ACT peak body People with Disabilities ACT from 1999–2005. He was awarded a Centenary medal in 2002 for service to the disabled community as well as Australia Day medals in 2003, 2004 and 2007 for his work on corporate volunteering, supporting the volunteer response to the Canberra bushfires and in the social housing area. Craig enjoys drama, politics, news and current affairs, science fiction and history, especially the colonial history of Australia and national development.

The role of members and functions of the ABC Advisory Council has been recently reviewed to provide a wider understanding of the work of the Council. The role of the Council is to:

- Either on its own initiative or at the request of the ABC Board, advise the Board on matters relating to the Corporation's broadcasting programs
- Provide a broad representation of Australian community concerns and interests in relation to programming
- Analyse and consider reports and papers, in relation to programming, provided by the ABC
- Facilitate communication between the community and the ABC Board
- Within the framework of the Council's annual work plan, carry out consultation seeking community views on ABC programming initiatives.

Council can also hold interest group meetings from time to time.

The Council met three times during the year, twice in Sydney in December and March and mid-year in Darwin, and two teleconferences took place in September and May. Feedback was provided to the ABC Board on a wide range of the Corporation's programs and services.

Either the ABC Board Chairman or the Managing Director met with the Advisory Council at each Council meeting.

ABC Divisional Directors also met with the Council to discuss key areas of interest including radio, television, online and audience research.

The Advisory Council prepared papers on:

- Australians and their Food System (May 2009)
- The ABC's Online Educational Presence (December 2008)
- The Look, Feel and Vibe of the ABC (July 2008).

These papers have been circulated in the ABC and will be considered in the Corporation's strategic planning.

The Council also provided input into the framework for the ABC's Reconciliation Action Plan and continues to be interested in that body of work.

At the request of the Managing Director, the Council's work plan for the remainder of 2009 includes community consultation on education. This work will be undertaken in consultation with community groups and school principals and teachers and will provide unfiltered views back to the Corporation.

The Advisory Council's recommendations and commendations for the year, together with responses from ABC management, appear in Appendix 6 (page 194).



# Significant Events

## July

ABC launched iView, Australia's first high-resolution, full-screen online video service.

The ABC provided cross-platform coverage of World Youth Day events and surrounding stories including the Pope's visit and the pilgrim's walk and evening vigil.

107.9 FM ABC Ballarat invited the people of Ballarat to celebrate its 5th birthday with a special live broadcast celebration on 25 July from the Queen Alexandra Bandstand rotunda.

999 ABC Broken Hill celebrated its 60th anniversary with a special day of broadcasting and a public open day on 30 July.

## August

ABC Local Radio broadcast over 170 hours of the Games of the 29th Olympiad from Beijing on stations around Australia, with the exception of 702 ABC Sydney.

Northern Territory *Grandstand's* Charlie King became the first Indigenous broadcaster to cover an Olympic Games.

*triplejuneartthed.com* celebrated its 2nd anniversary of discovering the best of unsigned Australian artists.

ABC Classic FM broadcast the final of the 9th Sydney International Piano Competition of Australia (SIPCA) live from the Sydney Opera House.

ABC Science launched the award-winning simulation game *Catchment Detox*. The online game was developed in collaboration with industry partners as the national project for Science Week 2008.

ABC Radio National launched *Pool*, a new online social networking and media sharing site inviting audiences to collaborate and share content and offering ABC archival material for mash-up.

## September

ABC Local Radio provided coverage of the Paralympic Games from Beijing.

ABC Classic FM broadcast live from Albury North Public School in Southern NSW, which won ABC Classic FM's 2008 *Grab the Goanna* competition.

*Landline* celebrated its 1 000th program on ABC1.

## October

Broadcaster Ray Martin delivered the 2008 Andrew Olle Media Lecture.

## November

The Asia Pacific News Centre launched, merging the news resources of Radio Australia and Australia Network.

*ABC News Breakfast* began on ABC2, and is also broadcast across the Asia-Pacific region on Australia Network. The three-hour weekday program is hosted by Virginia Trioli and Joe O'Brien.

Rupert Murdoch delivered the first of his six 2008 Boyer Lectures, "A Golden Age of Freedom".

A four-part series on the government of John Howard, *The Howard Years*, went to air on ABC1.

*triple j's* AusMusic Month included live events at the Powerhouse Museum in Queensland with John Steel Singers and Josh Reed, and a successful free Josh Reed gig at Sydney's Oxford Art factory.

Innovation launched *Sydney Sidetracks*, a cross-platform project combining Google Maps with archival content from the ABC and other cultural institutions. A mobile phone application allowed Sydney locals to experience content, such as radio documentaries, on location.

## December

ABC journalists and crews collected nine Walkley Awards for Excellence in Journalism at the 53rd annual awards ceremony in Melbourne.

Host of *The 7.30 Report*, Kerry O'Brien, crowned "Investigator of the Year" in the annual *GQ Magazine* "Man of the Year" awards.

ABC Classic FM broadcast "Just Classics" from the Tuggeranong Arts Centre in the ACT to celebrate the December launch of the new frequency Tuggeranong 99.1FM.

## January

*triple j's* 2008 Hottest 100 event held at Parramatta Park, attracting a crowd of about 6 000.

triplejuneearthed.com selected five unsigned bands to play at Big Day Out events in their state. The winners were: Gold Coast—*The Hungry Kids Of Hungary*; Sydney—*The Philadelphia Grand Jury*; Melbourne—*Washington*; Adelaide—*The Shiny Brights*; and Perth—*The Scotch of Saint James*.

## February

During the “Black Saturday” bushfires on 7 February, ABC Local Radio made unprecedented rolling emergency broadcasts in Victoria, accompanied by extensive news coverage across radio, television and online. ABC News designed a special website for the coverage.

*Message Stick* and *Behind the News* marked the first anniversary of the Federal Government’s apology to the Stolen Generations with a special broadcast.

## March

Temporary radio station 94.5 FM ABC Kinglake Ranges and complementary online site established to enable communication to surrounding fire-affected communities.

Crowds turned up to the Sidney Myer Music Bowl in Melbourne on 1 March for an ABC Community Concert in the aftermath of the Victorian bushfires.

Innovation launched a comprehensive suite of mobile phone products under the banner of ABC Mobile. ABC Mobile includes m.abc.net.au, a website designed for mobile phones, and two downloadable applications.

ABC Values announced: Integrity, Respect, Collegiality and Innovation.

## April

A range of individual activities and programs across all platforms commemorated, reflected and explored the historical meaning of ANZAC Day and related stories.

Innovation launched the ambitious three-dimensional website *Gallipoli: The First Day* for ANZAC Day. This interactive site is the equivalent of a stand-alone television feature documentary and sets a new standard for the coverage of historical factual events online.

## May

The ABC received a \$167 million triennial funding package for new initiatives in the Federal Budget, representing the biggest funding increase for the ABC since its incorporation in 1983.

More than a million Australians tuned in to ABC Television, or visited ABC’s iView site, to watch “Code of Silence” on *Four Corners*.

The *WotWots*, a new pre-school series launched on ABC Television and online.

ABC Commercial unveiled the new look for ABC Shops at the launch of its new concept store at Bondi Junction in Sydney.

*Australia All Over's* 2009 Say G'Day Tour launched on 20 May and takes in all the mainland states over a five month period. The first leg commenced in Victoria.

*triple j's* Gippsland *One Night Stand* concert was held in Sale, Victoria on 30 May.

ABC Classic FM launched The Classic 100 Symphony campaign in conjunction with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and *Limelight* magazine.

The first set of ABC Online user interface guidelines released by Innovation, outlining design and information architecture standards for use across the entire abc.net.au website.

ABC News co-hosted a conference at Ultimo, “Reporting Wars: Challenges and Responsibilities”.

## June

The ABC announced winner of the “Best Progress” category at the Corporate Responsibility Index (CRI) Awards held at the 10th National Business Leaders Forum on Sustainable Development at Parliament House, Canberra.

ABC Radio signed a contract with Australian rights holders Network Ten and Foxtel to acquire the Radio Rights (Australia only) for the 2010 Delhi Commonwealth Games.

Innovation launched *The Big Diary* website in beta mode, providing a national events portal that allows members of the Australian community to upload information about local events, no matter how large or small they are.

# The Year Ahead

THE ABC ENTERS the first year of the 2009–12 funding triennium ready to pursue its strategic vision as a media innovator delivering services to all Australians. The major funding increase granted in the 2009 Budget and the accompanying policy statement, *Strengthening our National Broadcasters*, demonstrates that there is significant support for the ABC as it navigates the challenges of the digital present.

The ABC's first task in the coming year will be to deliver to its audiences the new programs and services for which it received additional funding. In December 2009, it will launch ABC3, a dedicated digital television channel and website for older children, with a target of 50% Australian content. It will commission new and diverse drama content to ensure that the number of hours of high-quality, first-release Australian drama on ABC1 increases significantly in each year of the triennium. The Corporation will enhance the multimedia capabilities of its regional radio centres to transform them into broadband hubs delivering rich content created for and with regional and rural communities.

The ABC's Continuous News Centre will enable the ABC to expand on its already significant contribution to the diversity of news and current affairs in Australia. The project involves building a dedicated, 24-hour video news capability for online and broadcast delivery. To better meet the needs and expectations of growing online audiences, the Corporation will continue to refine and enhance abc.net.au, including improved way-finding and search tools to create a more responsive site.

The Corporation will continue to look for operational efficiencies, including the technological changes flowing from the Production Review.

Reflecting the ABC's long history of engagement with Asia and the Pacific, Radio Australia will celebrate the 70th anniversary of its first international broadcasts in December 2009.

Having committed to developing a values-based organisational culture in March 2009, the ABC will embed the new ABC Values—Integrity, Respect, Collegiality and Innovation—in its policies, strategies and performance frameworks, beginning with its senior management. These values will also be reflected in the ABC's new Corporate Plan, which will be prepared by the ABC Board and Management over the course of the year for introduction on 1 July 2010.

The ABC will engage with government on a series of major digital policy milestones and decisions in 2009–10 to ensure that the needs of national broadcasters are adequately taken into account. These include: the launch of digital radio services in the mainland capital cities; the cessation of analog television broadcasts in Mildura and the beginning of the countdown to full digital switch-over; the determination of the size and nature of the "digital dividend" that will be realised from the spectrum vacated in that process, a decision that may limit the scope of future broadcasting services; and the regulatory and company arrangements for the National Broadband Network, which will eventually deliver universally-available high-speed broadband.

Throughout, the ABC's focus will remain steadfastly on the needs and interests of the Australian community that it serves. Charged with encouraging a sense of national identity and informing the Australian people, the ABC has acquired the status of the "town square" in which the national conversation takes place. As both catalyst and host of this conversation, the Corporation will continue to use digital platforms and fast networks to redefine ideas about the nature of community.

## The ABC.