



AUSTRALIAN
BROADCASTING
CORPORATION

Office of the Chair
Ultimo Centre
700 Harris Street
Ultimo, NSW 2007

17 March 2023

Hon. Michelle Rowland MP
Minister for Communications
Parliament House
Canberra, ACT 2600

Email: Minister.Rowland@MO.COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au

Dear Minister

I am writing to inform you that the ABC Board has reappointed David Anderson as Managing Director of the ABC for a further five years. Directors believe Mr Anderson has done an excellent job since taking on the role of Managing Director and are keen for him to continue and enjoy job security. He has accepted the Board's offer.

This decision was carried unanimously at the ABC Board meeting held on 21 February 2023. Mr Anderson's current term will end on 30 June 2023 and his reappointment will commence on 1 July 2023 and finish on 30 June 2028.

Mr Anderson understands his reappointment will reduce his current term by nine months which he accepts in preference for permanency in the role enabling him to carry out the ABC's 5-year Plan.

We have been advised by your Department that the appointment of a Managing Director of the ABC may require the approval of Prime Minister and Cabinet according to the Cabinet Handbook. This was not required when the Board first appointed Mr Anderson as Managing Director in March 2019.

The Board believes it is important for the ABC's independence from Government to be maintained in appointing its Managing Director and that the appointment should observe the guidelines provided in the ABC Act.

**According to the ABC Act
Part III, Section 13 (clauses 1 & 3), Tenure of the Managing Director**

13 Tenure of Managing Director

- 1) Subject to subsection (2), the Managing Director shall be appointed by the Board for a period of 5 years, but is eligible for re-appointment.
- 2) Where the person holding office as Managing Director is re-appointed, the re-appointment shall be for a period not exceeding 5 years.
- 3) The Managing Director holds office, subject to this Part, on such terms and conditions as are determined by the Board.

I will contact the Department and the Remuneration Tribunal regarding Mr Anderson's appointment.

Regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ita Buttrose', with a horizontal line underneath.

Ita Buttrose AC, OBE
Chair



The Hon Michelle Rowland MP

**Minister for Communications
Federal Member for Greenway**

MC23-058688

Ms Ita Buttrose AC OBE
Chair
Australian Broadcasting Corporation Board
GPO Box 9994
SYDNEY NSW 2001

chairsoffice@abc.net.au

Dear Ms Buttrose

Thank you for your letter of 17 March 2023 regarding the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) Board's decision to reappoint Mr David Anderson as Managing Director.

The Australian Government is committed to upholding the independence of the ABC Board, which is enshrined under the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation Act 1983* (ABC Act) and through the Board's responsibilities under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. These are important safeguards that ensure the Board's decisions can be free from political interference.

As you outlined, under section 13 of the ABC Act, the ABC Board holds responsibility for the appointment of the Managing Director.

However, as Minister for Communications, I am required to adhere to procedural guidelines established by the Cabinet Handbook.

Paragraph 114 of the Cabinet Handbook provides that, where a significant government appointment is proposed, the responsible minister must write to the Prime Minister seeking approval of the appointment before any action is finalised. Under Paragraph 8 of Annex I, this procedure must also be followed for reappointments. Paragraph 115(b) of the Cabinet Handbook outlines that appointments to be brought to the Prime Minister's attention include full-time chief executive officer (CEO) positions, including in instances where the board selects the CEO.

As the ABC Managing Director position falls into the above CEO category in the Cabinet Handbook, I am required to write to the Prime Minister about the Board's decision prior to the appointment being finalised. This is the same process I must follow for all senior

appointments, including those where the appointment is formally made by a board, for example, the Special Broadcasting Service, National Broadband Network and Australia Post.

At the time of Mr Anderson's original appointment, the requirement for the Prime Minister and/or Cabinet to consider his appointment was also in place. It is unfortunate that proper process was not followed at that time, but I am committed to upholding the Cabinet conventions and guidelines established by the Cabinet Handbook and I am seeking your assistance in doing so.

In writing to the Prime Minister, I will attach the appropriate Cabinet paperwork, including a Curriculum Vitae and Private Interests Declaration for Mr Anderson. I have enclosed the relevant templates and request that these be completed and returned to my department as soon as possible.

I will advise you as soon as an outcome is reached by the Prime Minister and/or Cabinet on Mr Anderson's reappointment.

Thank you for taking the time to write to me on this matter.

Yours sincerely



Michelle Rowland MP

23 / 3 /2023

Enc



The Hon Michelle Rowland MP

**Minister for Communications
Federal Member for Greenway**

MS23-003352

Ms Ita Buttrose AC OBE
Chair
Australian Broadcasting Corporation Board
GPO Box 9994
SYDNEY NSW 2001

chairsoffice@abc.net.au

Dear Ms Buttrose

I am pleased to advise you that on **s 34** the Government approved the ABC Board's proposal to reappoint Mr David Anderson as ABC Managing Director for a period of 5 years commencing 1 July 2023.

As outlined in my letter of 23 March 2023, this process is in line with Paragraph 114 of the Cabinet Handbook, which provides that, where a significant government appointment is proposed, approval by the Prime Minister and/or Cabinet is required before any action is finalised.

Thank you for the opportunity to consider this appointment.

Yours sincerely

Michelle Rowland MP

11 / 5 / 2023

From: Peter Tonagh
Sent: Friday, 25 August 2023 6:42 PM
To: Ita Buttrose - Chair; Peter Lewis; Georgie Somerset; Mario D'Orazio; Laura Tingle
Cc: David N Anderson - Managing Director; Kecia Sandford-Clisby; Lauren Stokes
Subject: Re: ABC Managing Director David Anderson

Thanks Ita

Nice message. Very clear and positive.

PT

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From: Ita Buttrose - Chair <[REDACTED]@abc.net.au>
Sent: Friday, August 25, 2023 6:39:22 PM
To: Peter Tonagh <[REDACTED]@abc.net.au>; Peter Lewis <[REDACTED]@abc.net.au>; Georgie Somerset <[REDACTED]@abc.net.au>; Mario D'Orazio <[REDACTED]@abc.net.au>; Laura Tingle <[REDACTED]@abc.net.au>
Cc: David N Anderson - Managing Director <[REDACTED]@abc.net.au>; Kecia Sandford-Clisby <[REDACTED]@abc.net.au>; Lauren Stokes <[REDACTED]@abc.net.au>
Subject: FW: ABC Managing Director David Anderson

Good evening, everyone.
Not sure if you all read the Weekly Wrap but the message below is the lead item. FYI.
Have a good weekend.
Regards
Ita

Dear Colleagues

The ABC Board has confirmed the extension of David Anderson's position as Managing Director for five years, effective from 1 July. This means he will lead the ABC until 30 June 2028.

David has done an excellent job since being appointed Managing Director in 2019. The Board unanimously agreed to ask him to continue for a further five years and we are very pleased he said yes. This will ensure that David will continue to supervise the strategies outlined in the new Five-Year Plan, while providing stability to the leadership of the Corporation.

David continues to successfully manage the big change programs that are essential for the ABC's future. The Board fully supports his commitment to public broadcasting and a strong and independent ABC with high standards of public interest journalism.

The Board looks forward to continuing to work with David.

Ita Buttrose AC OBE
ABC Chair



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Ultimo Centre
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First Australians and Traditional Custodians of the land.

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