Question on notice no. 112

Portfolio question number: 112

2018-19 Supplementary budget estimates

Environment and Communications Committee, Communications and the Arts Portfolio

Senator the Hon. Eric Abetz: asked the Australian Broadcasting Corporation on 23 October 2018—

Senator ABETZ: Did the ABC in 1975 allow three self-confessed pederasts to be interviewed in the ABC Sydney studios and did the ABC ever report that to the New South Wales police? **Mr Anderson**: I am not aware of that. Did you say 1975? **Senator ABETZ**: Yes. Could you please take that on notice? **Mr Anderson**: I will take that on notice.
Answer —

Please see attached.

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice

Supplementary Budget Estimates October 2018

Communications Portfolio

Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Question No: 112

Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Hansard Ref: 23/10/2018, Page 81

Topic: 1975 interview in ABC Sydney studios

Senator Eric Abetz asked:

Senator ABETZ: Did the ABC in 1975 allow three self-confessed pederasts to be interviewed in the ABC Sydney studios and did the ABC ever report that to the New South Wales police?

Mr Anderson: I am not aware of that. Did you say 1975?

Senator ABETZ: Yes. Could you please take that on notice?

Mr Anderson: I will take that on notice.

Answer:

The ABC has no records of the interview, but according to contemporary reports the then-ABC radio program *Lateline* interviewed three 'self-confessed pederasts' in 1975.

The ABC has no record of whether it reported these men to the police, however contemporary newspaper reports state that the then-director of the Festival of Light, the Reverend Fred Nile, provided a copy of the recording to New South Wales police. At the time it was reported that a spokesman for the NSW Minister for Police stated that the NSW Police Commissioner, Mr Hanson, would "study the situation, to see if the Vice Squad should be involved".

Document 05

Australian
Broadcasting
Corporation

30 September 2025

Chair
Senate Environment and Communications Committee
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
via email: senator.ghosh@aph.gov.au

Dear Senator Ghosh,

REQUEST TO CORRECT THE RECORD

It has come to the ABC's attention that an answer it provided to a question on notice for the 2018-19 Supplementary Budget Estimates is incorrect.

The Senate Hansard (23 October 2018, page 81) reads as follows :

Senator Abetz : Did the ABC in 1975 allow three self-confessed pederasts to be interviewed in the ABC studios and did the ABC ever report that to the NSW police ?

Mr Anderson : I am not aware of that. Did you say 1975 ?

Senator Abetz : Yes. Could you please take that on notice ?

Mr Anderson : I will take that on notice.

In its written answer (Question number 112) the ABC stated the following :

The ABC has no records of the interview, but according to contemporary reports the then-ABC radio program Lateline interviewed three 'self-confessed pederasts' in 1975. The ABC has no record of whether it reported these men to the police, however contemporary newspaper reports state that the then-director of the Festival of Light, the Reverend Fred Nile, provided a copy of the recording to New South Wales police. At the time it was reported that a spokesman for the NSW Minister for Police stated that the NSW Police Commissioner, Mr Hanson, would "study the situation, to see if the Vice Squad should be involved".

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While Senator Abetz did not specifically request a tape or record of the Lateline program, the answer the ABC gave, that it has no records of the interview was inaccurate.

The ABC Archives does possess a digital copy of the episode. With the passage of time and with a number of key people no longer employed at the ABC, it is not clear how the error occurred.

The ABC would like to apologise to the Committee for this error and request that the record be corrected.

Kind regards,



Hugh Marks
Managing Director ABC