

**AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION
CORPORATE PLAN 2024-25**



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Cover image: The water meets the sand near the Garma Festival in remote northeast Arnhem Land. Photo credit: Che Chorley

This page: Danielle Walker is Marigold and Claire Lovering is Gert in *Gold Diggers*

OPENING STATEMENT

The Board, as the accountable authority of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, presents the 2024–25 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 2024–25 reporting period (FY25), and covers the reporting periods 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 honouring legislative obligations.

The ABC is operating in a constantly-evolving media environment. New technologies and digital platforms drive ever more fragmented audience behaviours and media distribution channels. Audiences have access to content from all over the world and there is increasing competition for their attention. And in the midst of this, social media carries harmful content and mis- and disinformation while, on the horizon, artificial intelligence looms as another disruptor, whether dangerous or benign.

At the same time, there is an opportunity for the ABC to use the digital environment to its advantage. Advances in technology are providing us with richer opportunities to meet audience needs and for audiences to discover the information and content most relevant to them. Social media platforms offer the potential to surface ABC content to audiences who don't use broadcast services. Artificial intelligence offers exciting new possibilities to realise efficiencies and improve services.

The ABC must strengthen its role if it is to buffer against the flood of international content and create a stronger sense of national community and togetherness.

Over the next year and beyond, the Corporation will continue to be an important component of the suite of Australian cultural institutions. It will share the rich stories that reflect our nation. It will remain a cornerstone of democratic values with a dedication to public interest journalism and, it will adapt and innovate in response to the changing needs of the Australian public.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kim Williams'.

Kim Williams AM

Chair, Australian Broadcasting Corporation

PURPOSE

The ABC Charter reflects a national commitment to provide high-quality Australian entertainment and comprehensive and reliable news services. The ABC is built around this purpose, creating content that informs, educates, and entertains in ways that reflect Australia's cultural diversity and contributes to a sense of national identity.

The ABC's purpose drives it to create and share distinctively Australian drama, comedy, and entertainment. It supports Australian music and the performing arts and is a major partner and driver of Australia's creative industries. It is a home for national conversations and strengthens democracy with its unwavering commitment to delivering independent news and information. At the same time, the ABC provides a safe environment for young audiences to laugh, learn, and explore the world.

The ABC strives to make this content accessible to, and relevant for, all Australians, including those living abroad. This is reflected in the range of services it offers across digital platforms, television, and radio. The ABC delivers content via its streaming services on ABC iview and ABC listen, as well as its websites, apps, podcasts, newsletters, and social media accounts.

It offers four free-to-air television channels and five broadcast radio networks across AM, FM, and DAB+ services. This includes the ABC's Local Radio services that reflect Australian communities and play a vital role in keeping Australians informed and safe during natural disasters.

In the coming years, the ongoing value and relevance of these services will depend on the ABC's ability to adapt them in response to audiences' changing needs. However its services may evolve, the ABC's purpose will remain as a constant guide that derives from the importance for all Australians to have access to high-quality Australian news, information, and entertainment.



Marc Fennell in *Stuff the British Stole*

KEY ACTIVITIES

The table below focuses on the activities that make a significant contribution to achieving the ABC’s purpose.

Key Activity	Description
Content creation, curation, and distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Producing independent high-impact news and information. The ABC’s reporters cover local, state, and national news, and the ABC maintains its own network of foreign correspondents, particularly in Asia and the Pacific, to tell international stories from an Australian perspective. • Commissioning high-quality culturally Australian 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 drama, comedy and children’s programs in partnership with Australian independent producers. It provides unique coverage of the arts, science, religion and ethics, health, Indigenous affairs and Australia’s rural industries. • Promoting the performing arts and contributing to a sense of national identity through arts and culture. • 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 from 58 regional bureaux and the ABC’s capital-city stations. • Supporting primary and secondary school teachers and students by providing curriculum-linked learning resources. A wide range of educational and educative programming can also be found across all of the ABC’s platforms. The ABC’s International Development team supports better democratic governance and promotes public interest journalism throughout the Asia-Pacific region by working in partnership with communities, civic organisations, and media organisations. • Promoting Australian music and artists and offering different styles to meet audience interests via its broadcast and streaming music stations, including triple j, Double J, ABC Classic, ABC Jazz and ABC Country. • Producing a range of national radio networks and digital radio/streaming stations, including RN offering in-depth analysis and thought-provoking ideas, the ABC Kids listen offering for young children and ABC Sport for sports fans. • Distributing the ABC’s screen content, including ABC News, via broadcast television channels and ABC iview. The ABC listen app provides access to all the ABC’s audio content live and on-demand. The ABC News website and app are leading destinations for news and information. Social media and other third-party platforms also play an important role in reaching audiences. A range of other sites and apps are dedicated to specific audiences and interests, such as the ABC Education website, the triple j site and app, and the ABC Kids app. The ABC also distributes content to 40 countries across Asia and the Pacific through 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.
The broadcast and transmission of the ABC’s radio and television services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring reliable transmission of the ABC’s content via analog and digital radio and ABC digital television. • Managing broadcast operations and broadcast technology and systems.

OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

The ABC's operating environment continues to be influenced by the changing media consumption habits of audiences, the evolving media landscape, regulatory developments, and advances and trends in technology. The ABC will continue to adapt to these changes and remains focused on meeting the needs of audiences in this environment.

Audience Trends

In video, the wide range of online viewing options means that a continued squeeze on the time spent with traditional free-to-air broadcasters is expected. The ACMA's data shows that Australian broadcasters' share of viewing (across broadcast and BVOD; out of total viewing across broadcasters, SVOD, and other video including YouTube) fell from 47% in 2021 to 44% in 2022 to 39% in 2023 as audiences continue to fragment.

The shift to online viewing has created opportunities for the ABC to better connect with audiences. Investment in personalisation on ABC iView has improved content discovery and enabled a more tailored offering, which has led to increased use. Minutes viewed on ABC iView has increased by more than 20 per cent year-on-year.¹ Over two million Australians are logged in to ABC accounts each week, and ABC iView remained the top ranked free-to-air Broadcaster Video-On-Demand (BVOD) service across Australia in June 2024.²

While television broadcast audiences are declining, they are nonetheless significant, and are expected to remain so for some time. In 2024, the ABC television network is the number one rated network based on reach.³ In particular, traditional broadcast services are still popular across older audience segments. The ABC will continue to offer compelling broadcast television services for the foreseeable future for those audiences, as well as for the significant proportion of Australians who are excluded from the benefits of Australia's digital transformation.

The amount of time audiences spend with subscription video on-demand (SVOD) services appears to have plateaued, and time spent viewing social media and user-generated video (e.g. YouTube, TikTok) continues to rise. Around one-fifth of time spent viewing video in 2023 was with social media (22%). This rises to 65% for 18–24-year-olds and 38% for 25–34-year-olds, but is already a material part of the media diet of all age groups, making up 13% of video time for those aged 55–64 years.⁴

Facebook and YouTube have the greatest number of users (at 19 million active users and 18 million unique Australian visitors per month),⁵ while TikTok users are spending the longest amount of time per month on the app (42 hours per month, compared to 21 hours for YouTube and 20 hours for Facebook). TikTok has an estimated 8.5 million Australian users.⁶

Social media and third-party platforms help the ABC to reach and engage younger audiences, who are less likely to visit the ABC's owned platforms. In 2024, the ABC reaches 31% of 18–34-year-olds via its presence on social media and third-party platforms. The ABC's investment in vertical video capability over the past few years, including the launch of ABC News on TikTok in December 2022, has seen it grow its TikTok reach from 5% in 2022 to 9% in 2024.

In audio, fewer Australians are listening to AM radio, and the market-wide decline is having an impact on audiences for ABC services.

One important way the ABC is responding to the shift in listening trends is by enhancing its online offering, including the popular ABC Listen app and web. Recent product initiatives saw substantial increases in new users to the ABC Listen app. Podcasts are another way the ABC engages online audiences, and in the June 2024 Triton Podcast Ranker the ABC was the No. 3 podcast publisher, with more titles in the top 200 than any other publisher.⁷ Three ABC titles featured in the top 20 podcasts, with *ABC News Top Stories* at number three, *Conversations* at number six and *ABC News Daily* at number 12.

The ABC will be undertaking comprehensive reviews of its radio networks in 2024–25 to ensure they continue to meet audience needs and expectations.

Overall news consumption in Australia is high. However, signs of news fatigue and disengagement continue to cause concern. The proportion of Australians reporting low or no interest in news grew from 36% in 2016 to 46% in 2024, while active avoidance of news increased.⁸ In particular, the number who said they “often” avoid news rose from 8% in 2019 to 15% in 2024. This trend, together with changes to the algorithms of social media platforms that de-prioritise news, had an impact on audiences for the ABC News website in 2023–24, although efforts by the organisation to better engage audiences are bearing fruit. ABC News was the number one digital news brand in June 2024 with an online audience of 12.6 million.⁹

The ABC will be launching a major upgrade to the ABC News website and app in 2024–25 to provide a fresh and modern experience for audiences. New design and functionality, together with a broader content offering, will deliver significant improvements to the audience experience and help to engage lighter users.

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.

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

This fragmentation of news consumption is expected to increase over the Plan period as people’s use of broadcast television and radio continue to decline. The shift from appointment-based consumption will directly affect audiences for scheduled news bulletins and current affairs programs. The ABC is increasingly focusing on social media, on-demand services, and personalisation to ensure it remains relevant to audiences.

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.

Media Market Environment

The media environment in Australia continues to be influenced by global digital platforms.

In the video market, the focus of key SVOD players on profitability over subscriber growth may drive declines in content production volumes across the industry. The introduction of advertising tiers signals a convergence with commercial free-to-air broadcasters, and the slowing of growth in subscription video may signal an opportunity for free alternatives, such as BVOD services, including ABC iview.

Amongst Australian commercial radio broadcasters and free-to-air television networks, growth is becoming more difficult to achieve as global platforms dominate audience attention and the advertising market contracts. In 2024, Australia’s largest media organisations announced a range of job cuts impacting their newsrooms.¹⁰

The environment is further challenged for news providers by the impact of Meta’s plan not to renew deals to pay Australian news publishers for content once current agreements expire this year. A number of Australian outlets received payments from Meta as a result of the 2022 agreements, including the ABC. At the time of writing, it is unclear whether the Government would choose to designate Meta under the News Media Bargaining Code, and whether Meta would withdraw from promoting news pages. The outcome of this announcement could have a further detrimental impact on the state of local and public interest journalism in Australia.

The Public Interest Journalism Project reports that, in March 2023, some 25 local government areas did not have a local news publisher, five of which also did not receive local radio news.¹¹

The ABC has an important role to play in supporting news diversity and providing news in underserved areas and, in 2022, recruited more than 50 additional journalists across regional Australia. The challenges being faced by the commercial sector further underline the ABC’s critical role in local news and local content.

While use cases are only just emerging, over the Plan period, developments in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Generative AI are expected to have an impact on the media environment in Australia. Generative AI systems continue to emerge 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, and increasingly video and audio content. Audiences could experience a proliferation of content, which may be novel, informative and entertaining, but will undoubtedly also include harmful misinformation and disinformation.

There is also considerable scope for AI technologies to help content makers – whether at the research stage, or in the reversioning of content for different users and platforms. The ABC will continue to monitor the impact these developments will have on the media environment and will explore the potential of AI to enhance the delivery of its services.

Regulatory and Policy Settings

The ABC is engaged with policy developments that impact its operations and the media market that it operates in, and is prepared to respond to new challenges and opportunities arising from changes to the policy environment. The ABC also continues to monitor developments in overseas markets to the extent that they have the potential to inform the actions of policymakers in Australia.

Recent developments include:

- The legislation of prominence on smart TVs, which will shape the way TV applications 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.
- The expansion of the Government's 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. This enabled the Corporation to expand its services to audiences in Australia's neighbourhood.

- The ABC awaits the next steps from Government following the announcement by Meta of its plan not to renew deals to pay Australian news publishers. The Government could choose to designate Meta under the News Media Bargaining Code, or consider other regulatory action. The ABC is reviewing the impact this may have on its operations, and has made a submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry that was established in May 2024 to examine these issues.

A number of policy reform processes remain underway that will shape the future media regulatory environment and could have implications for the Corporation into the future. The ABC will continue to engage in these and other regulatory and policy processes. Policy reform processes currently underway include:

- The intention to introduce a minimum Australian content quota on video streaming services.
- The consideration of opportunities to improve Australia's copyright framework, including a regime to manage orphan works and consideration of the intellectual property effects of AI.
- An ongoing process for the review of the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth), with the Government expected to release a draft privacy bill in August 2024 that addresses many of the proposals that the Government previously either agreed with or agreed with in principle. The Government anticipates legislation early in 2025 with a two-year transitional period. The ABC will continue monitoring the regulatory developments to ensure its use of personal information aligns with the revised legislation and public interest journalism is protected.

Financial and Planning Context

The Australian Government's 2023 decision to establish five-year funding cycles for the national broadcasters has brought greater certainty in relation to funding and supports longer-term planning, especially in relation to capital projects. This certainty of funding is a major asset for the ABC, and an advantage in comparison to its peers. However, terminating funding measures will place pressure on the ABC to alter its operating model to live within its funding envelope.

There are a number of factors – some known and some unknown – that 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.

Key considerations in the planning environment 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 need is managed alongside the need to maintain broadcast services.
- Operational and compliance costs, which may continue to rise in the business environment where requirements in areas like cyber-security, sustainability, and privacy safeguards are expected to increase.
- The confirmation from Meta that funding will cease, along with the uncertainty of designation and the consequences, has been considered in the ABC's planning.
- Changes in the production landscape which could result in higher production costs and greater competition for production funding from international sources, as well as screen agencies.
- 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 Technology Environment

Over the Plan period, 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.

Advances in artificial intelligence (AI) are providing new possibilities for content creation that have the potential to change creative roles and processes. These technologies also raise ethical, philosophical, and legal questions. Moreover, generative AI systems are constrained by the data used to train them and text-based generators 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.

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 the opportunities of new tools and technology, and to 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 relies on its workforce to fulfil its purpose. In the current environment of disruption across the media industry, there are a number of challenges and opportunities anticipated over the Plan period.

For the ABC, 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. These changes mean that new skills will be required to achieve the ABC's purpose. Attracting and retaining employees with the right skills in a competitive market will challenge the ABC to focus on its value proposition for existing and prospective employees. An understanding of future workforce capabilities will inform training, skills and expertise required for the new roles, and will require a clear roadmap and culture of continuous learning and change.

Prospective employees are more attuned to the social values, purpose, diversity and inclusion policies and environmental sustainability of employers. As a values-driven organisation, the ABC has long been an employer of choice and will continue to play to its strengths in order to maintain this and remain competitive in the labour market.

Cooperation

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 would like to thank 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 has developed a strong relationship with the Australian independent production sector through its investment in external productions. 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 collaborate 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 collaborate 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. Most recently, the ABC has engaged in a number of partnerships with public broadcasters throughout the Pacific region to champion the public interest and support democratic values in the region. The ABC also collaborates with public media on content initiatives, with ongoing examples including the Kindred Animation Collaboration with CBC (Canada), a science documentary film collaboration with Channel 4 (UK), France Télévisions, ZDF (Germany), CBC, SVT (Sweden) and ORF (Austria), and audio collaborations with Radio New Zealand.
- 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.



Ginger and the Vegesaur. Credit Cheeky Little Media

THE ABC FIVE-YEAR PLAN 2023–2028

The ABC launched its Five-Year Plan 2023–2028 in June 2023.¹² The ABC has always evolved to meet the needs and interests of Australian audiences as well as the changing media landscape. 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.

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.



Tony Armstrong’s Extra-Ordinary Things

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.

Remote northeast Arnhem Land photographed from above. Photo credit: Che Chorley

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.



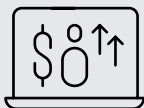
We will expand our use of strategic partnerships to increase effectiveness of content, services, and research and development.



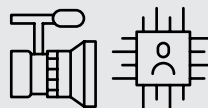
We will be in more communities, including online, and foster national conversations across a range of perspectives and points-of-view.



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 2024–25, 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

Resources	2024–25 Budget	2025–26 Forward estimates	2026–27 Forward estimates	2027–28 Forward estimates
Program 1.1 – ABC General Operational Activities Expenditure (\$'000)	1,081,566	1,100,580	1,084,801	1,103,706

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

Resources	2024–25 Budget	2025–26 Forward estimates	2026–27 Forward estimates	2027–28 Forward estimates
Program 1.2 – ABC Transmission and Distribution Services Expenditure (\$'000)	207,111	212,687	217,100	222,460

A summary of financial information for the 2024–25 budget and the forward estimates for the ABC is set out below:

Forward estimates

Revenue	2024–25 Budget \$'000	2025–26 Forward Estimate \$'000	2026–27 Forward Estimate \$'000	2027–28 Forward Estimate \$'000
ABC Government Appropriations				
Operational Appropriations	1,196,101	1,229,214	1,225,444	1,253,404
Total Appropriations	1,196,101	1,229,214	1,225,444	1,253,404
Own Source Revenue	90,654	83,002	76,229	73,282
Total Revenue	1,286,755	1,312,216	1,301,673	1,326,686
Operational Expenditure	1,288,677	1,313,267	1,301,901	1,326,166
Capital Expenditure	85,084	82,894	82,880	83,053
Borrowings	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500

Source: 2024–25 Portfolio Budget Statements, May 2024 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.



A young Indigenous girl at Garma 2024. Photo credit: Che Chorley

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.

By 2028 we will...



Have implemented an audience-first approach to commissioning, producing, and distributing content, serving national audiences on digital platforms, 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 ABC’s Five-Year Plan. It sets out the key initiatives for 2024–25 that will deliver value this year and set up the Corporation for years to come. This Plan is the Corporation’s response to the changing media landscape and the changing behaviours of audiences. It reflects an increased focus on serving audiences stand-out content on the platforms they prefer.

Throughout this transformation, 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.

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



ABC News Top Stories

ABC News Top Stories is a news update podcast created specifically for digital audiences, explaining the key stories of the day in under two minutes. Launched in 2024, it was the No 1 news podcast in Australia in June and No 3 in the overall rankings. To reach a wide range of audiences, the podcast is available on ABC listen along with other third-party podcast apps.



The Assembly

A six part series that follows autistic student journalists as they prepare and interview six of the nation’s biggest names including the Prime Minister. Mentored by ABC journalist Leigh Sales, the students will all undertake a specifically designed journalism course delivered by Macquarie University, the first of its kind in Australia. *The Assembly* is being made in partnership with Aspect – Australia’s largest service for people on the autism spectrum, and Bus Stop Films – Australia’s leading production group supporting people with disabilities in film-making.

By 2028, more than half of the ABC's audience engagement will be via digital services, across the ABC's own digital platforms as well as third-party platforms. The focus for the ABC will increasingly be on content that works best for digital audiences.

Throughout this digital transformation, the ABC will focus on bold, distinctive creative planning and execution. It will deliver expanded creative offerings that challenge Australians to think widely and respond with delight and wonder. The ABC will invigorate national storytelling, expand its Children's and Educational programming, and provide more coverage for the Arts.

There will be an increase in serious television documentaries on national and international subjects of relevance, and an expanded drama and comedy production slate. The ABC will continue to partner with the independent production sector to support Australian stories.

ABC iview will be an even better streaming platform with a heavier ballast of Australian-produced content, and ABC listen will enrich its offering with a greater selection of ABC curated podcasts.

To support this outcome there will be a focus on data-led commissioning, which integrates audience needs, insights and performance into commissioning, distribution and product development processes.

In News, the team will deliver content for social media that complements specialist long-form journalism in the areas of Science, Arts, Indigenous, Religion-Ethics, and other specialist areas. ABC News content will be available across all platforms, including on ABC iview, ABC Listen, the ABC's website and apps, YouTube and social media channels. The team will continue to deliver high impact content, and will be supported to drive storytelling innovation and strategic distribution. High impact stories that drew significant audiences in 2023–24 included *Nemesis* and *Four Corners* programs *Super Power* and *Old School*.

To reach audiences outside of the ABC's own platforms, the organisation will be optimising investment in commissioning, distribution, and community management for third-party platforms in line with audience opportunity, creating more news stories of interest for younger Australians on growing platforms, and commissioning bespoke content for third party platforms to meet the needs of younger audiences.

To engage international audiences, the ABC will be expanding ABC Radio Australia's FM footprint, adding 6 additional FM transmitter locations to the 18 currently running across the Pacific and Timor Leste, and tailoring the ABC Radio Australia content to cater for these new markets.

In audio, the ABC will be reviewing its radio offering to ensure it meets audience needs and expectations. ABC radio plays an important role in promoting and supporting Australian music, and will adapt and remain relevant. Radio National must more effectively demonstrate intellectual ambition, and local radio must be more effective in reflecting and connecting with communities across Australia.

Radio, and increasingly podcasting, are critical to the ABC in engaging with local communities, informing and entertaining, supporting Australian music, and sharing the arts and big ideas with all Australians.

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

2023–24 saw growth in weekly logged-in users, particularly in users of the ABC News app and the ABC listen website and app. In 2024–25 the ABC will continue to evolve its core digital products – ABC listen, ABC iview and ABC News – to help audiences discover the content that is most relevant and interesting to them, and that will meet their desire for ease-of-use and accessibility.

Enhanced recommendations algorithms were tested and implemented in 2023–24, resulting in a more individualised and tailored audience experience and greater audience engagement. These features will continue to be improved and extended in 2024–25 and beyond.

In 2024–25 the ABC listen app will be refreshed to better engage audiences and showcase its range of content, and product changes and enhancements will be made to the ABC News app and ABC News website, designed to deliver a significant improvement in audience experience and help to attract and engage lighter users in particular. The ABC will continue to work towards creating a tailored on-demand video news service using personalisation and curated news content on ABC iview.

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

This initiative considers the long-term outlook. The ABC expects broadcast radio and television services to continue to be an important way for audiences to access its products over the course of the plan.

In mid-2024 the ABC announced the launch of two new channels, ABC Family and ABC Entertains, and four new innovative digital streams. These changes demonstrate the way that the ABC is adapting and evolving in line with changing audience trends and behaviours. ABC Family replaces ABC TV Plus and ABC Entertains replaces ABC ME. On ABC iview, four digital streams were launched focusing on dedicated genres, including children’s LIVE action, animation, education, and family viewing, to reflect ABC iview’s growing relevance to young online ABC audiences.

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

2024 saw the launch of the “Stay in the Know” campaign, designed to increase awareness of the ABC News app, the ABC News website and ABC newsletters as the easiest way for audiences to find trusted information. 2024–25 will see further campaigns, including external promotion, cross-platform promotion, and improved branding across ABC touchpoints. Initiatives designed to improve metadata and personalisation will also assist in achieving greater awareness across the ABC’s digital products.

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

In 2024–25 and beyond, the ABC will place greater focus on fulfilling audience needs, interests and aspirations, and will be an important source of a stronger sense of national community and togetherness. The ABC will solidify its ‘national campfire’ role in the civic and cultural life of the nation.

In 2024 the ABC relocated a range of Ultimo-based content makers and program teams to Parramatta to better embed itself in the community it serves. 1 in 10 Australians live in Greater Western Sydney, and the move is designed to locate the ABC in closer proximity to this large audience segment.

Throughout 2024, the ABC presented a range of large events, as well as connected regularly with local communities, to foster a sense of national community and togetherness. These activities will continue over the plan period.



One Night Stand 2024

After a five-year break, triple j’s *One Night Stand* returns in September 2024. An all-ages live music event designed to support and promote Australian artists, the location is chosen from a pool of submissions from regional Australian cities and towns. This year’s event is being held in partnership with Music Australia and Support Act.



Pacific Break: fostering Pacific music’s next generation

Since 2008, ABC Radio Australia’s *Pacific Break* has been unearthing the Pacific and Timor-Leste’s best emerging musical talent. Billed as the biggest music competition in the Pacific, the winner flies to Australia to perform at WOMAdelaide. In 2024, *Pacific Break* launched with a sunset concert in Nadi, Fiji where past winners and finalists performed their hits to a sold-out crowd. The ABC recorded the sold-out show for its international television, radio and digital audiences in a co-production with the Fijian Broadcasting Corporation.

Maintaining the trust of Australians remains of critical importance, and in 2024–25 the *ABC News Verify* team will continue to build its capability as a centre of excellence for verifying the accuracy of the information in online communities and tackling misinformation. The News team will also continue to consider its response to the emergence of AI in news, including developing and distributing editorial guidelines on its use.

Over the Plan period ABC News will offer enhanced digital political coverage enabled by new roles, the launch of a politics blog, the formation of a national digital reporting team and breaking news team, live sport blogs, including weekend AFL & NRL, and daily business blogging.

The return of the *Stateline* brand in 2023–24 has been extremely effective in focusing metropolitan and regional journalists' effort on higher-quality storytelling. *Stateline* has delivered agenda-setting, original stories and probing interviews.

ABC News' Community Impact Team delivers first-class audience and community engagement, particularly in regional Australia. Its regular projects include *Takeover* and *Heywire*, inspiring events that elevate the voices of young people in regional areas and facilitate content projects being commissioned for young people in those areas. The most recent *Takeover* initiative, *Takeover Lismore*, saw students from all nine high schools in the Lismore LGA represented among the winners, demonstrating the strong engagement of the local community.

The News team will be elevating the excellent rural journalism from the nearly 80-year-old *Country Hour* program by taking those stories to the rest of Australia via digital platforms and *Landline*. Similarly, the ABC's regional radio network will continue to surface unique Australian stories, which can be amplified across News' platforms.

The emphasis of local regional radio is on being live and local, closely connected to communities, and delivering the day's news in a timely and relatable way. The ABC's regional radio teams are producing impactful podcasts and are the engine for rolling Emergency Broadcasting.

In 2024–25 the ABC will continue to 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.



BTN High

ABC News produces *BTN* and *BTN High* as an important part of the ABC's commitment to educational content and media literacy. Launched in February 2023, *BTN High* has produced more than 115 episodes designed to appeal to teenage audiences, while acting as valuable educational tools through all levels of secondary school. Each story is mapped to relevant areas of the Australian Curriculum to enhance subject specific learning. In 2024, *BTN High* has also published weekly teaching resources alongside key stories.

Since launch, *BTN High* stories have been viewed more than 10.5 million times across all platforms. Instagram and YouTube are strongly represented in these numbers and are platforms where young people are already heavily engaged. The *BTN High* team is engaging directly with teachers and students. Feedback sessions with both teachers and students are held regularly to ensure stories are interesting and relevant across a range of subject areas. The rise of fake news and the increased importance of questioning media sources is something *BTN High* is actively seeking to address through targeted events and ongoing coverage.

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

In 2023–2024 the ABC built on its extensive and long-standing partnerships across Australia’s creative industries to increase the impact of its investments. The announcement of the return of *One Night Stand*, an all-ages live music event designed to support and promote Australian artists and engage with regional communities, in partnership with Music Australia and Support Act, was the highlight of early 2024.

A snapshot of further strategic partnerships undertaken in 2023–24 is listed below. The ABC will continue to expand on its partnerships in 2024–25 and beyond.

- A Memorandum of Understanding with the National Film and Sound Archive designed to encourage greater collaboration.
- A number of important partnerships with Pacific news organisations including the Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Corporation (VBTC), the Tonga Broadcasting Commission (TBC), and the National Broadcasting Corporation of Papua New Guinea (NBC). The partnerships are designed to further champion the public interest and support democratic values in the region.
- A strategic partnership with the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBAA), designed to support the diversity of local news reporting, both geographically and culturally. Key objectives include sharing knowledge, skills and content between ABC Newsrooms and more than 500 community broadcasting services, 80% of which are in regional areas.

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

Over the past year the ABC has continued to transform its technology as part of its transition to a digital media organisation. It has also undertaken a number of pilot projects that will come to fruition in 2024–25 and beyond.

The establishment of the ABC’s Parramatta studios as innovative and operationally effective production spaces was a significant undertaking throughout 2023–24. This effort continues into 2024–25.

Trials of enhanced recommendation and personalisation algorithms undertaken in late 2023 showed that a more individualised and tailored experience increased audience engagement, expanded the breadth of content shown to audiences and increased the number of program plays. The enhancements were rolled out to wider audiences in 2024 and will continue to be enhanced and improved in 2024–25.

The past year also saw the launch of a pilot in Queensland designed to modernise audio infrastructure with software-based audio systems and workflows, which will be the foundation for how all ABC audio content will be created and delivered in the future. The roll-out of this program will help to reduce the size and complexity of the technology footprint in each of the ABC’s locations through centralisation and in part, migration to a software-based system.

A pilot program designed to improve workflows for the ABC’s mobile journalists was undertaken in early 2024. The pilot program enabled reporters to easily shoot and deliver same-day content, an important improvement for the ABC’s mobile journalists. The learnings from the pilot are being examined to support further development of a solution.

In 2024–25, the ABC will continue to undertake modernisation activities, including improving audio streaming, establishing a third-party data centre to update hosting, and creating a strategy for the evolution of modern playout capability at the ABC. Essential infrastructure will be replaced and upgraded to mitigate cyber vulnerabilities and maintain on-air services, and production tools and infrastructure will be modernised to improve quality and flexible workflows.

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

The ABC will continue to 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. At the same time, it will focus on improving the employee experience to maintain its position as an employer of choice.

In 2023–24, the ABC implemented the People Hub Workforce system which is a new rostering, leave and record management system. This program and supporting work enable the ABC to pay employees correctly, transforming rostering and time and attendance practices and will lead to improved outcomes.

In 2024–25, the ABC will undertake the following activities to achieve this priority:

- A review of the ABC’s culture, with a commitment to ensuring a high-performing and inclusive workplace environment.
- Continue to build manager capability and leadership skills to increase effectiveness and enhance the employee experience.
- Further develop and streamline the ABC’s entry level programs (including work experience, internships, cadetships and traineeships) to ensure consistency and build a talent pipeline throughout the organisation.
- In content and news teams, continue to implement training programs with a focus on building editorial knowledge and digital skills.

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

In the coming years the ABC will continue to deliver on the commitments set out in its *Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Plan 2023–2026* and *Elevate Reconciliation Action Plan 2024–2027*. This includes role modelling inclusive practices, offering inclusive content, products and services to all Australians, working to better attract and retain diverse talent, enhancing connections with Indigenous and diverse communities, and creating a culture of accountability and transparency.

In 2023–24 the ABC launched its partnership with First Languages Australia (FLA) and renewed the partnership with First Nations Media Australia (FNMA). These partnerships include initiatives designed to provide ABC employees with a greater understanding of the perspectives, practices, and cultural approaches of Indigenous communities. The News and Content divisions each appointed Senior Cultural Advisors to provide informed advice and support to their division around awareness of Indigenous and diverse cultural issues and protocols. Last year also saw the expansion of audio description services to ABC iView, enabling audiences who are blind or have low vision to enjoy their favourite on-demand shows, movies and news in a more inclusive way.

In 2023–24 the ABC also held the inaugural Diversity and Inclusion Symposium for ABC employees. The theme of the event was ‘Celebrating Every Story’ and featured keynote addresses, panel discussions and reinforced the importance of diversity and inclusion in shaping ABC strategies. The event also saw the launch of the ABC’s new Indigenous employee network group ABC Mob. The Symposium is a deliverable in the *Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging Plan 2023–2026* and will be a recurring annual event throughout the life of the plan.

During the year the ABC announced the establishment of the Committee on the Review into ABC Systems and Processes in Support of Staff who Experience Racism, led by Dr Terri Janke. The review is due to provide its report and recommendations in July 2024.

Over the next year the organisation will be implementing the ABC’s Disability Action Plan as part of its commitment to removing the barriers people with disability face in their work at the ABC, and will continue the roll out of the “Building an Inclusive Culture” program, first launched in 2023, to support a more inclusive and accessible workplace.

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

The ABC continues to work towards its long-term goal of net zero emissions by 2030. Sustainability is a priority for the ABC and it will continue to work with suppliers reduce the impact of ABC operations and its use of resources on the environment.

The ABC continues to transition to lower-emissions vehicles where operationally feasible. In addition, the organisation has solar installations on 17 of its buildings, and will continue to upgrade its buildings over time. A supplier-engagement plan is designed to track and reduce Scope 3 emissions in line with target, and support the organisation in sustainable procurement.

In its screen productions and commissions, the ABC will continue to work closely with Sustainable Screens Australia to implement the 'albert' tool to measure environmental impact and develop a carbon action plan.

On-screen and on-air, the Corporation will continue to reflect and report on the environment across its output – holding to account in its journalism, documenting the natural world and explaining both the science of climate change, and what sustainability means in the daily lives of all Australians.

Denise Scott and Matt Okine in *Mother and Son*

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	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
Driving trust in the ABC	The ABC is more* trusted by Australians than any other media	ABC Corporate Tracking Survey	More trusted than other media organisations	More trusted than other media organisations	More trusted than other media organisations	More trusted than other media organisations
	<small>*= />19% above commercial media / newspapers</small>		<small>*= />19% above commercial media / newspapers</small>	<small>*= />19% above commercial media / newspapers</small>	<small>*= />19% above commercial media / newspapers</small>	<small>*= />19% above commercial media / newspapers</small>
	Why this is important 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.					
Audience engagement	% of ABC users using more than 1 ABC platform	ABC Corporate Tracking Survey	78%	79%	80%	80%
	Why this is important 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	62%	62%	62%	62%
	Why this is important Reaching all Australians is the key strategic indicator of ABC success, and the ABC strives to be relevant to all Australians. Ongoing global competition combined with increasing news avoidance is resulting in softer than expected news web audiences. This is having an impact on combined weekly reach (%), and the forecast has been revised down compared to the previous year's outlook.					
	Third-party digital weekly reach (%)	ABC Corporate Tracking Survey	27%	27%	28%	30%
	Why this is important The ABC aims to engage audiences on the platforms they prefer.					
Digital engagement	Weekly active users across ABC owned digital platforms	Internal digital data	13.4 million	13.6 million	13.9 million	14.0 million
	Active weekly logged-in users*	ABC Active IDS Gigya IDs recorded as Active in SnowPlow	2.2 million	2.3 million	2.4 million	2.5 million
	Why this is important 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.					
Employee Engagement	Employee engagement score (%)	Engagement survey	Achieve Australian benchmark	Achieve Australian benchmark	Achieve Australian benchmark	Achieve Australian benchmark
	Why this is important 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.					

Audience Outcome Measure	Source	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28	
Diversity	Indigenous employees	Employee data	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%
Why this is important						
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	28%	30%	30%	30%
	Culturally diverse content makers**	Employee data	28%	30%	30%	30%
	Employees with a disability	Employee data	7%	8%	8%	8%
Why this is important						
A broad range of perspectives, approaches and ideas makes us a stronger, more creative public broadcaster better able to engage with the Australian community.						
Sustainability	Scope 1 & Scope 2 Emissions***	Market-based method	15,790 tCO ₂ e	12,333 tCO ₂ e	8,883 tCO ₂ e	5,437 tCO ₂ e
Why this is important						
The ABC is committed to achieving net zero scope 1 & scope 2 emissions by 2030.						

Outer years to be confirmed annually by the Board

* Average for the final month of the financial year.

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

*** APS Net Zero Reporting Framework used to calculate Scope 1 & Scope 2 emissions.

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

Measure	Source	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
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
Why this is important					
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	Complaints investigated and outcomes reported	Complaints investigated and outcomes reported	Complaints investigated and outcomes reported
Why this is important					
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	Average response rate <30 days	Average response rate <30 days	Average response rate <30 days
Why this is important					
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	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
Percentage of the Australian population who are able to receive ABC analog radio transmissions	Broadcast Australia data	At least 99%	At least 99%	At least 99%	At least 99%
Degree to which the eight state and territory capital cities have access to ABC digital radio transmissions	Australian Bureau of Statistics data	100%	100%	100%	100%
Percentage of Australian homes able to receive ABC digital television transmissions*		100%	100%	100%	100%
Why this is important					
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	Escalations to BAI Communications Australia	Escalations to BAI Communications Australia	Escalations to BAI Communications Australia
Why this is important					
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

* Reporting of actuals will include the percentage reach for ABC digital television using terrestrial services (excluding satellite).

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	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
Transmission performance	BAI Communications Australia and Regional Broadcasters Australia Holdings Pty Ltd	At least 99% for all services	At least 99% for all services	At least 99% for all services	At least 99% for all services
Why this is important					
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		100%	100%	100%	100%

Outer years to be confirmed annually by the Board

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.

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. 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 a digital media organisation.

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.

Delivering 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 and discoverability of high-quality news: 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 approachable 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. The ABC continues to face workforce challenges in a highly competitive and evolving media and technology landscape.

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 unscheduled 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.

Endnotes

- 1 OzTAM VPM minutes, Jan-Jun 2024.
- 2 OzTAM VPM, w/c 8 July 2024.
- 3 OzTAM Combined Metro + RegionalTAM Overnight, C7 and C28 data from Wks 1-26 2024.
- 4 *Communications and media in Australia series: How we watch and listen to content*, Commonwealth of Australia (Australian Communications and Media Authority) 2023.
- 5 Statistics compiled by [SocialMediaNews.com.au](https://www.socialmedianews.com.au) for December 2023. Source: **Vivid Social - Social Media Agency**. Figures correct as of 31/12/23.
- 6 <https://newsroom.tiktok.com/en-au/celebrating-our-thriving-community-of-australians>
- 7 **Triton Digital Podcast Rankers, June 2024**
- 8 Park, S., Fisher, C., McGuinness, K., Lee, J., McCallum, K., Cai, X., Chatskin, M., Mardjianto, L. & Yao, P. (2024). *Digital News Report: Australia 2024*. Canberra: News and Media Research Centre, University of Canberra.
- 9 Ipsos iris Online Audience Measurement Service, June 2024, Age 14+, PC/Laptop/smartphone/tablet, Text only, News Tier 1 category (Excl. Weather & News Aggregators), Audience (000s).
- 10 **Crikey's 2024 Australian news job cuts tracker**
- 11 Dickson G. 2020. Australian News Data Project. Melbourne: Public Interest Journalism Initiative <https://piji.com.au/news-mapping/australian-news-data-project/>
- 12 The ABC's Five-Year Plan is available online at <https://www.abc.net.au/about/media-centre/press-releases/abc-five-year-plan-2023-2028-an-essential-part-of-daily-life-for/103717788>

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. The Projections involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors beyond control that may cause the ABC's actual results, performance or achievements to be materially different from any future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by the Projections. Other than as required according to Reporting Obligations, the ABC is under no obligation to update the Projections based on circumstances, developments or events occurring after the publication date of this document.



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