



SENATOR THE HON MICHAELIA CASH
Minister for Employment
Minister for Women
Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the
Public Service

SENATOR THE HON MITCH FIFIELD
Minister for Communications
Minister for the Arts
Manager of Government Business in the Senate

Mr Justin Milne
Chair
Australian Broadcasting Corporation
GPO Box 9994
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Mr Milne

We are writing to you in relation to matters that have recently come to light regarding allegations of misconduct, harassment and assault in the media, entertainment and arts industries. These allegations are concerning.

The Government's strong view, which we are sure you share, is that harassment of any kind in the workplace is totally unacceptable. Everyone deserves to feel safe in their workplace. Whilst there are, of course, male victims of workplace harassment, it is evident that the vast majority of allegations in the media, entertainment and arts industries appear to involve conduct against women.

Given the volume of complaints now coming to light and the extremely serious nature of these matters, we seek your assurance that every effort is being made to ensure safe workplace cultures with robust policies and procedures to deal with instances of misconduct and harassment. I note that a number of organisations have already shown leadership in this area.

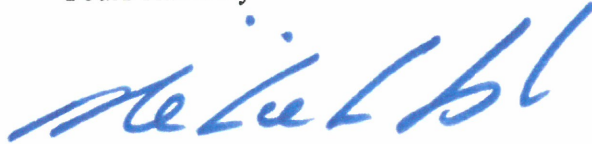
We ask that you take appropriate steps to ensure that policies and procedures are in place to deal with these matters which are adequate for both contemporary and historic matters. We also suggest that you consider commissioning external advice, where necessary, on current best practice for fostering safe workplace cultures, backed up by strong workplace policies.

While these matters are a responsibility for employers, as the Minister for Communications and the Arts and Minister for Employment and Women and, in light of the matters now arising, we seek to be reassured that the Australian media, entertainment and arts industries are taking the necessary steps to appropriately deal with these issues. Australia has some of the best and most talented media, entertainment and arts professionals in the world and it is important that we do all we can to assure the next generation of professionals that these great Australian industries adhere to the highest standards of workplace practice and culture.

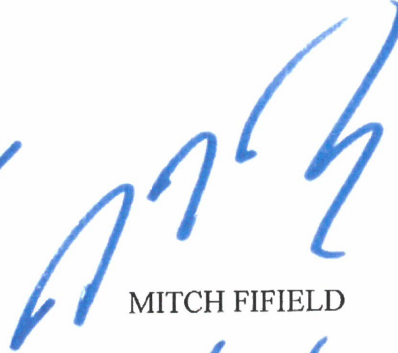
The Commonwealth has a number of institutional resources which are available to you to draw upon. The Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Kate Jenkins, has a wealth of experience which together with the offices of the Australian Human Rights Commission is there to be utilised. The Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) has a significant body of work and policy in relation to workplace practices and procedures for Commonwealth bodies. The APSC and Commissioner John Lloyd are available to share this knowledge and experience.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

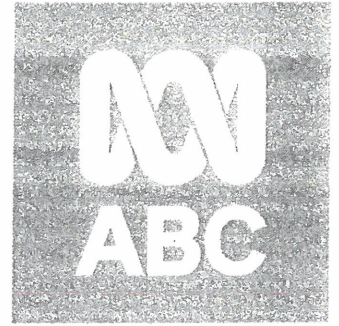


MICHAELIA CASH



MITCH FIFIELD

6/12/17



17 January 2018

Senator the Hon Mitch Fifield
Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate
Minister for Communications
Minister for the Arts
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash
Minister for Jobs and Innovation
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Ministers,

I refer to your letter dated 6 December 2017 regarding allegations of misconduct, harassment and assault in the media, entertainment and arts industries.

The ABC shares the Government's view that workplace harassment of any kind is unacceptable. In adhering to the highest standards of workplace practice and culture, the ABC is committed to:

- ensuring employees feel safe in the workplace;
- providing an environment where employees are empowered to raise legitimate issues or concerns and lodge grievances or complaints; and
- ensuring that instances of misconduct and harassment are appropriately dealt with.

The ABC's commitment to a safe and effective workplace is underpinned by the following established policies, guidelines and training programs:

- **ABC Work Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy**
- **ABC Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy**
- **ABC Grievance Resolution Guidelines**
- **ABC Values and Standards of Workplace Behaviour**
- **ABC Work Health and Safety Induction and Training**

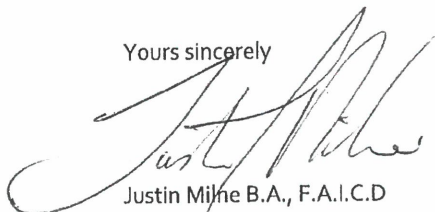
As well as being a key component of employee induction and training, the ABC's workplace policies are accessible to employees at all times via the intranet. These policies are regularly revised to ensure they continue to be robust and effective. The ABC Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy was reviewed and updated most recently, in consultation with the ABC's external legal partners. The ABC Board approved the updated policy in November 2017, and as part of its relaunch, the policy is supported by dedicated HR advice and training across the country.

In addition to these existing policies and procedures, the ABC has also recently developed the **ABC Respect Network**. The purpose of this initiative is to provide additional peer to peer support and further training on the policies and guidelines that govern workplace behaviour. The ABC Respect Network will be launched ABC-wide in January 2018.

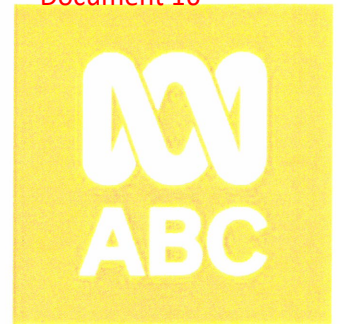
The ABC has been proactive in cultivating a safe and inclusive workplace. However, the Corporation also recognises that this is a significant employment issue that requires continual vigilance and I can assure you that this will remain a matter of priority for the ABC.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Justin Milne', written in a cursive style.

Justin Milne B.A., F.A.I.C.D.
ABC Chairman



4 September 2018

Senator the Hon Mitch Fifield
Minister for Communications and the Arts
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister,

RE: Editorial governance and training

I am writing to outline steps the ABC Management and Board have taken recently to improve our governance and training in relation to Editorial Policies.

The Board is very aware of its obligations under section 8 of *The ABC Act* to ensure the gathering and presentation of news and information by the Corporation is accurate and impartial according to recognised standards of objective journalism.

The Board recently reviewed the Editorial Policies and Guidelines and formed an Editorial Committee of the Board to allow for more detailed reporting of policies and practices and closer monitoring of editorial standards. I attach a copy of the Editorial Committee Charter for your information.

The Board also reviewed the FY19 training program to be provided by the ABC Editorial Policies and ABC Legal teams:

- Relevant staff must now complete at least one hour of Editorial Policies training and one hour of legal training annually.
- The legal training comprises five modules, to recognise the range of skill levels across the organisation and to meet the needs of the individual staff members. Topics range from Media Law Basics through to an Investigations Masterclass for our most experienced journalists.
- The training also requires detailed knowledge and currency with the Editorial Policies. That knowledge will also be tested.
- Wherever possible, training will be delivered face-to-face.
- Testing will be online and trackable.

In addition to the training, all content makers have access to around-the-clock editorial support and pre-publication advice.

We recognise that high editorial standards underpin audience trust in the news and information delivered by the ABC and we are hopeful that this increased level of governance around our editorial standards will further increase our trust with all Australians.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Justin Milne', is written over a light blue circular stamp.

Justin Milne - Chairman



Editorial Committee

Charter

Committee of the Board of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Approved: 10 August 2018

1. Introduction

The Editorial Committee (Committee) has been established by the Board.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the Committee is to assist the Board to fulfil its duties and responsibilities as set out in the ABC Act by providing objective, non-executive oversight of:

- a) Editorial policy, guidance and training
- b) Complaints reporting
- c) Reputational risks associated with or arising from editorial governance issues

3. Responsibilities

The Committee has no executive powers, unless specifically delegated to it by the Board. Delegations as at the date of this Charter are set out below.

The responsibilities of the Committee are as follows:

Editorial Policy, Guidance and Training

- 3.1 Overseeing and making recommendations to the Board regarding the Corporation's:
 - a) Editorial policies and guidance notes; and
 - b) Editorial training.

Complaints Reporting

- 3.2 Overseeing the Corporation's complaints management framework.
- 3.3 Reviewing the Corporation's complaints management framework on a regular basis to satisfy itself that it continues to be sound.



Reputational risks associated with or arising from editorial governance issues

- 3.4 At the request of the Board, considering and evaluating reports on the specific reputational risk issues/ exposures which are considered to have arisen as a result of deficiencies in the editorial governance framework or in the application thereof.
- 3.5 Considering and evaluating reports on significant editorial errors that have or may impact the Corporation's reputation, role or performance.
- 3.6 Reviewing significant editorial governance incidents/issues and industry developments with high potential or actual reputational risk, as requested by the Board from time to time.

Review

- 3.7 Reviewing the Committee Charter biennially, and recommending any proposed changes to the Board for approval.

4. Administration

4.1 Membership

The Committee must have at least three members, the majority of whom must be non-executives. Committee members must have appropriate qualifications, knowledge, skills or experience to assist the Committee to perform its functions.

4.2 Editorial Advisor

The Editorial Director is an advisor to the Committee, and is required to attend each meeting, or send a delegate.

4.3 Term

Committee members will be appointed for an initial term of three years, unless determined otherwise by the Board. At the expiry of the initial term, it is at the discretion of the Board that the Committee member be reappointed for another two years. No Committee member can be a member of the Committee for greater than five years.

The re-appointment of Committee members may incorporate a formal review of their performance. The Chair of the Committee will provide advice to the Board on a member's performance where an extension of the member's tenure is being considered.

4.4 Chair

The Chair will be appointed by the Board, and must be a non-executive director of the Board.

The Chair is responsible for overseeing the effective functioning of the Committee and effective and transparent communications between the Committee, management and the Board.



4.5 Secretary

The Company Secretary (or delegate) will be the secretary of the Committee.

5. Meetings

5.1 Frequency

The Committee will meet quarterly.

5.2 Attendance

Directors who are not members of the Committee may attend Committee meetings, as observers.

The following persons have a standing invitation to attend Committee meetings:

- Managing Director
- General Counsel

5.3 Quorum

A quorum will be two ABC non-executive directors.

Members of the Committee may participate in meetings by telephone or video. Any such participation is counted as attendance for the purposes of establishing a quorum.

All decisions of the Committee will be decided by a majority vote of members present.

5.4 Conflicts of interest

Members of the Committee must comply with the ABC Board Protocol in respect of conflict of interest matters. Committee members must declare any conflicts of interest at the commencement of each meeting or before discussion of the relevant agenda item or topic.

Details of any conflicts of interest must be minuted.

6. Access

The Committee shall have free and unfettered access to all information as required to carry out its duties and may request the attendance of any employee at Committee meetings.

The Committee may seek independent legal or other professional advice, as reasonably required to meet its responsibilities, at the Corporation's expense, subject to the approval of the Chair of the Board.



Australian
Broadcasting
Corporation

7. Reporting

The Chair of the Committee must report to the Board on the work performed by the Committee following each meeting.

8. Definitions

In this document:

“Board” means the board of directors of the Corporation.

“Corporation” means the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, as established pursuant to the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation Act 1983* (Cth).