

# Overview

## ABC Audiences



### Audience Trends

For audiences one of the greatest benefits of the digital age is increased choice. New television and radio channels offer greater variety to audiences, while richer and more diverse content is available online. Understanding audience behaviours and preferences is central to the ABC's content delivery strategy.

In 2008–09, the ABC continued to demonstrate its commitment to ensuring content is available to audiences when and where they choose, across different channels, formats and devices. At June 2009, the combined average weekly reach of ABC Television, Radio and Online was estimated to be 73%. This result was consistent with the past three years.<sup>1</sup>

Offering a vast array of content ranging from news and current affairs, television, radio and sport; to health, science and technology, children's content and parenting, ABC Online offers audiences an opportunity to watch, listen, read and engage in a variety of ways. ABC Online audiences can create and share their own content and mash-ups, and join conversations and share experiences via message-boards and forums.

In 2008–09 ABC Online averaged nine million visitors and 20 million visits a month.<sup>2</sup>

Podcasting and vodcasting allows the audience to download audio and video files to their computer or portable digital device so that they can listen to or watch programs at a time and in a location more convenient to them. The ABC is one of the largest creators of podcasting and vodcasting material in the world, with a wide variety of television, radio and news programs available for download.

<sup>1</sup> Newspoll, *ABC Awareness and Usage Survey 2006–09* and ratings data analysis for same periods.

<sup>2</sup> WebTrends OnDemand data, July 2008–June 2009.



Victoria *Country Hour* host Libby Price talks to the crowd at Meningie about the condition of Lake Albert; Russell Woolf, presenter 720 ABC Perth *Drive* program broadcasting from the most marginal seat of Kingsley during the Western Australian state election in September 2008.

In the six months to June 2009, 23 million podcasts and vodcasts were downloaded from ABC Online. Of these, 19 million were podcasts downloaded from ABC Online, with Radio National alone delivering eight million podcasts. The most frequently downloaded programs included *triple j's New Music*, *News' AM* program and Radio National's *Late Night Live* and *Breakfast* programs.

The interplay of the traditional media and new media was embraced by ABC Television's *The Gruen Transfer*. Available to audiences in a variety of forms, *The Gruen Transfer* was one of ABC Television's most popular programs in 2008–09, achieving a combined five-city average audience of 1.3 million across ABC1 and ABC2.<sup>3</sup> It was also watched via ABC iView, recording 70 000 views<sup>4</sup> and downloaded 260 000 times via ABC Online.<sup>5</sup> *The Gruen Transfer* website was visited by 185 000 Australians in the quarter ending May 2009.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> OzTAM data, March–May 2009.

<sup>4</sup> WebTrends OnDemand, April–June 2009.

<sup>5</sup> WebTrends Analytics, downloads of MP4 and WMV files, January–June 2009.

<sup>6</sup> Nielsen Online, Home and Work Panel, ABC Custom Reports, quarter ending May 2009.

<sup>7</sup> Nielsen Radio surveys, five-city, Newcastle and Canberra, 2008–09 and 2007–08.

<sup>8</sup> Nielsen Radio surveys, five-city, Newcastle and Canberra, 2008–09 and 2007–08.

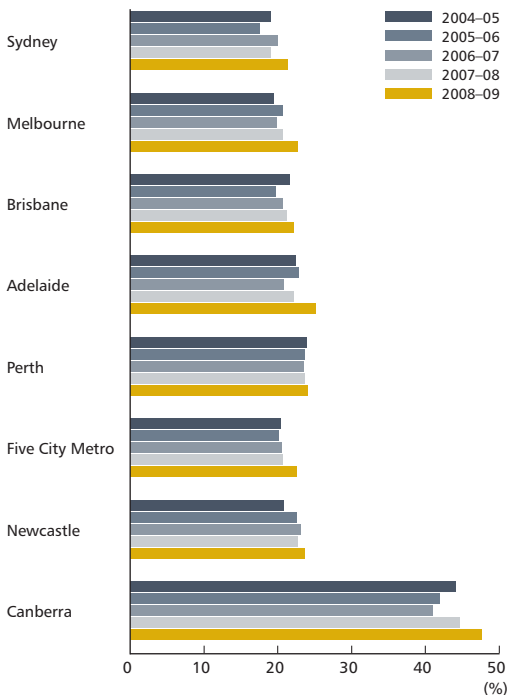
## ABC Radio Networks and Content

In 2008–09, ABC Radio continued to grow its audiences in terms of overall number of listeners and share of listening. The average weekly reach of ABC Radio in the five major mainland capital cities was a record four million, up by 6.2% on the previous year. The number of listeners to ABC Radio grew in every city with growth ranging from 4% in Brisbane and Perth, to almost 8% in Melbourne. When the cities of Newcastle and Canberra are added the reach of ABC Radio grew to 4.3 million listeners a week, up by 6% on the previous year.<sup>7</sup>

Overall ABC Radio share was also on the rise in 2008–09. In the five cities ABC Radio share was a record 22.6%, up 1.9 points on the previous year. Increases in share were recorded in all cities. Growth in share ranged from 0.4 of a point in Perth, to 3.0 points in Adelaide, while share in Sydney and Melbourne increased by 2.2 points and 2.0 points respectively. Share in Newcastle was also up, at 23.7% (22.7% in the previous year) and share in Canberra was 47.6% up 2.9 points on the previous year.<sup>8</sup>

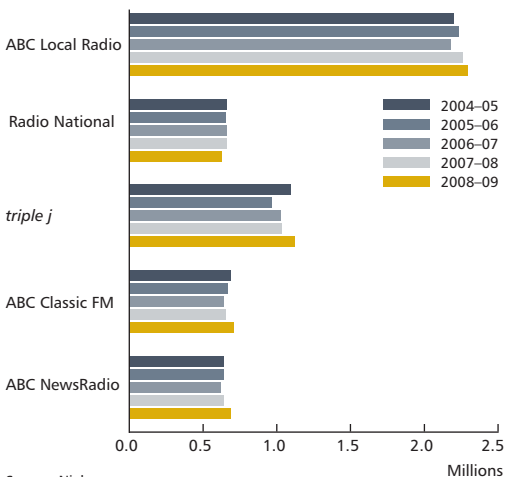
ABC Local Radio reached a record 2.3 million listeners a week in the five cities and when Newcastle and Canberra were added, reach was just under 2.5 million. Local Radio reach ranged from approximately 200 000 to 300 000 in the smaller cities of Adelaide, Perth and Brisbane, while in the larger cities of Sydney and Melbourne reach ranged from 700 000 to 800 000.

Aggregate ABC Radio Audience Share %



Source: Nielsen Media Research

Average Weekly Radio Reach—Five City



Source: Nielsen



The average weekly reach of Local Radio in both Newcastle and Canberra was just under 100 000 listeners a week.<sup>9</sup>

ABC Local Radio's share was also at a record high of 11.3% in the five cities in 2008–09, up by 0.9 of a point on the previous year. Share was over 10% in Sydney, Brisbane and Perth, and over 12% in Melbourne and Adelaide. Local Radio share was 10.3% in Newcastle and 18.2% in Canberra.<sup>10</sup>

774 ABC Melbourne, on radio and online, performed a vitally important role for communities affected by the February 2009 bushfires in Victoria. ABC Local Online and ABC News Online combined forces to provide extensive coverage and a space for communities to share their experience. Content that generated strong interest among audiences included interactive elements (such as maps) and user-generated content (such as blogs and photos). Emergency and assistance information provided local communities with vital facts and links. In the five days of peak fire activity, from 7 February to 11 February 2009, ABC News and ABC Local Online recorded a total of 17 million page views.<sup>11</sup> In the month of February 2009, more than one million Australians used the combined ABC Radio websites, representing the peak month of audience reach for these sites.<sup>12</sup>

In 2008–09, *triple j* reach grew for the third consecutive year to an average of 1.1 million

<sup>9</sup> Nielsen Radio surveys, five-city, Newcastle and Canberra, 2008–09 and 2007–08.

<sup>10</sup> Nielsen Radio surveys, five-city, Newcastle and Canberra, 2008–09 and 2007–08.

<sup>11</sup> WebTrends OnDemand data, 7–11 February 2009.

<sup>12</sup> Nielsen Online, home and work panel, Australia, 2008–09.





*triple j*'s 2008 Hottest 100 event attracted a crowd of about 6 000. Over 800 000 votes were cast from around the country.

listeners a week in the five cities. Share in the five cities was also up for the third year running, averaging 4.5% for the year. Among those aged 18–24 *triple j* share was 12.6% in the five cities, up by two points on the previous year.<sup>13</sup>

*triple j* also enjoys a significant online presence. Over 250 000 Australians engaged with the site in January 2009 when it featured the countdown to the *triple j* Hottest 100.<sup>14</sup> In the first six months of 2009, *triple j* recorded just under four million podcast downloads. *New Music* files proved to be most popular, with a total of 2.3 million downloads for the period.<sup>15</sup>

ABC Classic FM and ABC NewsRadio both grew their audience reach by 8% in 2008–09, both reaching an average of 700 000 listeners a week in the five cities. ABC Classic FM five-city share was up half a share point to 2.9%, while share for ABC NewsRadio share was up by 0.2 of a point to 1.6% in 2008–09. In the five cities in 2008–09, Radio National reached more than 600 000 listeners a week and share held steady at 2.2%. In the first six months of 2009, Radio National delivered eight million podcast downloads to audiences. Among the more popular downloads from the more than 50 regular Radio National programs available to audiences as podcasts, were *Late Night Live* (880 000 downloads), *The Science Show* (660 000 downloads) and *All in the Mind* (600 000 downloads).<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Nielsen Radio surveys, five-city, 2008–09 and 2007–08.

<sup>14</sup> Nielsen Online, home and work panel, Australia, January 2009.

<sup>15</sup> WebTrends Analytics, downloads of MP3 files, from January–June 2009.

<sup>16</sup> WebTrends Analytics, downloads of MP3 files, from January–June 2009.

<sup>17</sup> Australian Government, Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, Digital Switchover Taskforce, Digital Tracker, Report on Quarter 1, 2009.

<sup>18</sup> OzTAM data, 2007–08 and 2008–09.

## Television

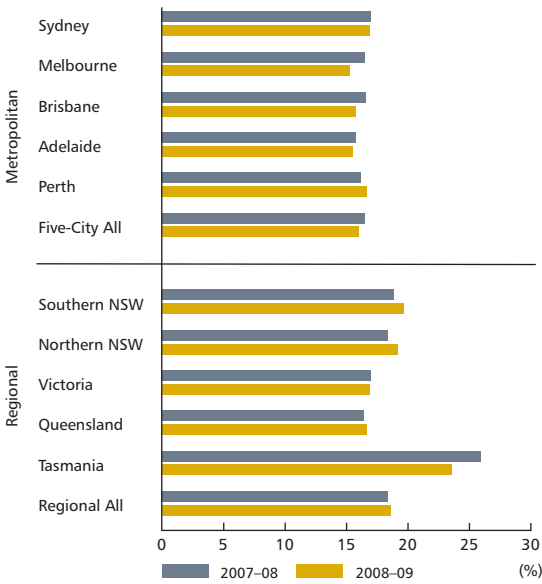
The take-up of digital television continues to increase. The Digital Switchover Taskforce's Digital Tracker estimated, in a report released in March 2009, that 47% of Australian households had converted to digital terrestrial television.<sup>17</sup> The Tracker acknowledged that a further 16% use subscription television. The majority of these would also have access to ABC digital services.

In the past 12 months, the ABC's digital channel, ABC2 has experienced significant audience growth, providing complementary programming to ABC1. Network Ten has launched its high-definition digital channel, ONE, and SBS has launched its standard definition channel, SBS TWO. In the coming year, Australians will have even more choice with the launch of additional free-to-air digital channels including ABC Television's children's channel, ABC3.

## ABC Television Programs and Content

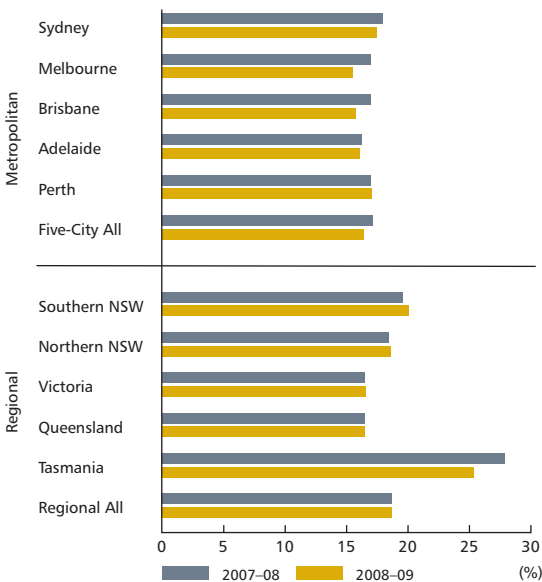
2008–09 marks the first full year of television ratings available for ABC2 in the five major mainland capital cities. The combined prime-time, free-to-air share in the metropolitan markets for ABC1 and ABC2, was 17.2%. ABC1's share for this period was 16.4% (down from the record 17.2% in 2007–08). All-day free-to-air share (6 am to midnight) for ABC1 and ABC2 was 17.2%, while ABC1's share was 16%, compared with 16.5% in 2007–08.<sup>18</sup>

ABC1 Free-to-Air Television People Share 2008–09, 6 am to Midnight

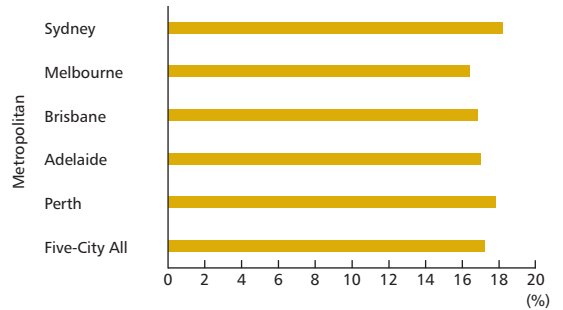


Source: OzTAM and RegionalTAM Television Ratings

ABC1 Free-to-Air Television People Share 2008–09, 6 pm to Midnight

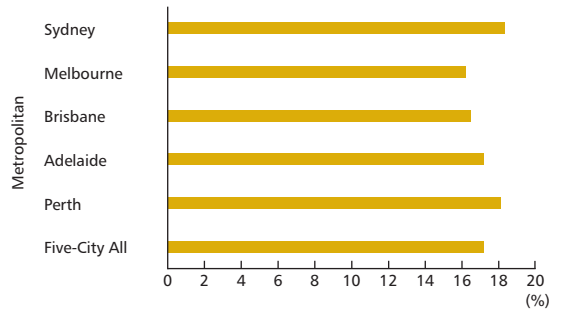


Total ABC (ABC1 + ABC2) Free-to-Air Television People Share 2008–09 6 am to Midnight



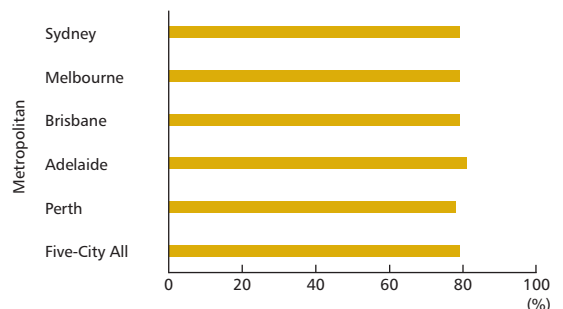
Source: OzTAM Television Ratings

Total ABC (ABC1 + ABC2) Free-to-Air Television People Share 2008–09 6 pm to Midnight



Source: OzTAM Television Ratings

Total ABC (ABC1 + ABC2) Television Reach 2008–09, Four Weekly



Source: OzTAM Television Ratings



Two of the ABC's most popular television programs: *Spicks and Specks* and *The Chaser's War on Everything*.

In 2008–09, in the five cities, 35 programs on ABC1 achieved audiences of one million viewers or more. Of those, 21 were Australian, including *Spicks and Specks*, *The Chaser's War on Everything*, *The Gruen Transfer*, *ABC News*, *Australian Story*, *Enough Rope with Andrew Denton* and *The Prime Minister is Missing*.<sup>19</sup>

In the aggregate regional television markets of Queensland, northern and southern New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania, ABC1's free-to-air prime-time share was 18.7%, the same as in 2007–08. All-day share (6 am to midnight) was 18.6%, up by 0.2 of a point on the previous year.<sup>20</sup>

According to OzTAM, live viewing of television at home (in the five cities) has declined slightly since 2007–08.<sup>21</sup> From early 2010, OzTAM will report time-shifted viewing (i.e. the at-home playback of recorded material within a specified timeframe) in the ratings data. RegionalTAM, measuring the aggregated regional television markets and Tasmania, will also measure and report time-shifted viewing in their data from 2010.

In the five cities, total free-to-air reach was down slightly, while the reach of subscription television increased marginally. The average weekly reach of ABC Television across both ABC1 and ABC2 was 8.54 million (59.3% of the population) in 2008–09. ABC1's average metropolitan weekly reach was 8.34 million in 2008–09, down compared to 8.50 million in 2007–08. This represents 57.9% of the metropolitan population, compared to 60.1% in 2007–08. In 2008–09,

ABC2's average metropolitan weekly reach was 1.4 million which represents 9.6% of the metropolitan population.<sup>22</sup>

In the aggregated regional markets and Tasmania, ABC1's reach was 4.01 million in 2008–09, compared with 4.04 million in 2007–08. This represents 60.9% of the regional population, compared with 62.4% in 2007–08. However, when reach is combined across both ABC1 and ABC2 for 2008–09, ABC's total reach is 4.08 million or 62% of the regional population.<sup>23</sup>

Increasingly audiences are consuming ABC Television in different ways. Many ABC Television programs are available to stream or download via ABC Online. Since its launch in July 2008, ABC iView has recorded an average of 400 000 visitors and just under one million visits per quarter.<sup>24</sup> Australians are able to catch-up on shows they have missed and discover new programs across a range of genres including drama, entertainment, children's, arts, education, factual and news and current affairs programs.

Audiences continue to enjoy the option of downloading ABC Television programs. In the first six months of 2009, there were four million vodcast downloads of ABC programs from ABC Online. Among the most frequently downloaded

<sup>19</sup> OzTAM data, 2008–09.

<sup>20</sup> RegionalTAM data, 2008–09.

<sup>21</sup> Total television viewing includes free-to-air and subscription television.

<sup>22</sup> OzTAM data, 2008–09.

<sup>23</sup> RegionalTAM data, 2008–09.

<sup>24</sup> WebTrends OnDemand, July 2008–June 2009.





*Play School* presenters Justine Clarke and Jay Laga'aia with some of their friends; *The WotWots* scoot around on their hover-chairs, in front of their steam-powered spaceship; *News Breakfast* on ABC2 breaks the news of Michael Jackson's death via the giant screen in Melbourne's Federation Square.

were *Media Watch* (495 000 downloads), *triple jtv* (485 000), *Good Game* (445 000) and *The Gruen Transfer* (258 000).<sup>25</sup>

Among Australians, ABC Television Online continues to be one of the most popular Australian television sites. In 2008–09 the site reached 711 000 viewers, up 5% on the previous year.<sup>26</sup> When the ABC Kids sites are included, the reach was 924 000 in 2008–09, up 8% on the previous year.<sup>27</sup> The most visited program websites 2008–09 included *Gardening Australia*, *At the Movies* and *The Gruen Transfer*.

### ABC Children's Programs and Content

ABC Television maintained its dominant share among children in its weekday children's timeslots on ABC1 and ABC2. Among children aged 0–12 years, ABC1's free-to-air share in the morning slot (6 am to 10 am), was 65.7%, steady compared to last year. In the afternoon timeslot (3 pm to 6 pm), ABC1's share was 54.0%, down by 5.6 points on last year. Popular Australian children's programs on ABC1 in 2008–09 included *Blue Water High*, *Tracey McBean*, *Bindi the Jungle Girl*, *Justine Clarke: Songs to Make You Smile* and *Zigby*.<sup>28</sup>

ABC2 provides programming for pre-schoolers on weekdays between 10 am and 4.30 pm. In 2008–09, ABC2 achieved a free-to-air share

of 19.5% among pre-schoolers. In the Saturday children's timeslot (7 am to 3 pm), ABC2's share among pre-schoolers was 14.1%. Popular Australian children's programs on ABC2 in 2008–09 included *Adventures of Bottle-Top Bill and His Best Friends*, *Pop Pups*, *Creature Features* and *Play School*.<sup>29</sup>

In the first six months of 2009, the average weekly reach of ABC1 and ABC2 children's timeslots was 2.8 million, which represents 19.2% of the metropolitan population. Among children aged 0–12 years, average weekly reach across ABC1 and ABC2 children's timeslots was 1.2 million (50.9% of the population aged 0–12).<sup>30</sup>

Young Australians who enjoy children's programming on ABC1 and ABC2 also visit the ABC Children's websites, including *The Playground*, aimed at pre-schoolers, and *RollerCoaster* aimed at older children. Reach for *The Playground* site peaked at 229 000 in May 2009, and reached an average audience of 162 000 each month in 2008–09 compared to 144 000 in 2007–08. *RollerCoaster's* audience also grew year-on-year, peaking at 311 000 in December 2008 and reaching an average of 146 000 Australians each month in 2008–09 compared with 122 000 in 2007–08.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>25</sup> WebTrends Analytics, downloads of MP4 and WMV files, from January–June 2009.

<sup>26</sup> Nielsen Online, Home and Work Panel, 2008–09.

<sup>27</sup> Nielsen Online, Home and Work Panel, ABC Custom Reports, 2008–09.

<sup>28</sup> OzTAM Data, 2008–09, five-city metro.

<sup>29</sup> OzTAM Data, 2008–09, five-city metro.

<sup>30</sup> OzTAM Data, January–June 2009, five-city metro.

<sup>31</sup> Nielsen Online, Home and Work Panel, ABC Custom Reports 2008–09.



## ABC News and Current Affairs Programs and Content

Daily, millions of Australians watch, listen and read ABC news and current affairs programs, while a growing number contribute online and on-air. The ABC delivers news in a wide range of formats meeting the growing demand from audiences for news as it happens.

An example of multi-platform content delivery, and corresponding audience response, was the May 2009 *Four Corners* program, “Code of Silence”. On ABC1, the program achieved a five-city average audience of one million viewers<sup>32</sup>, while on ABC Online, in the week of broadcast, there were 122 000 views of the episode on ABC iView<sup>33</sup>, a then record high for a program.

Audience response to ABC news and current affairs online continues to be strong. In the first six months of 2009, 2.4 million ABC News and Current Affairs programs were downloaded with *AM*, *PM* and *The World Today* among the most popular.<sup>34</sup> In 2008–09, ABC news and current affairs online, achieved an average monthly reach of 1.1 million, up by 6% on the previous year. Reach peaked at 1.4 million in the month of February 2009.<sup>35</sup>

On ABC1, the five-city average for the *7pm News* decreased compared to 2007–08 on both weeknights and weekends. The weeknight *7pm News* was down by 5%, with an average audience of 1 million, Saturday *7pm News* was down by 9% at 902 000, and Sunday *7pm News* was down by 8% at 978 000.

Consistent performers among the flagship current affairs programs were: *Lateline Business*, with an average audience of 156 000 (up 20% on the previous year); *Insiders*, with an average audience of 199 000 (up 9%); *Australian Story*, with an average audience of 932 000 (up 3%); and *The 7.30 Report* with an average audience of 860 000 (up 1%). Compared to 2007–08, audiences for *Four Corners* were down slightly, by 2%, to an average of 817 000 and for *Foreign Correspondent* were down 3% to 522 000. Since moving to its new 8 pm timeslot, *Foreign Correspondent*'s audience is averaging 674 000, up 42% compared to its average audience in the 9.30 pm slot (474 000).<sup>36</sup>

ABC Radio continued to attract and retain substantial audiences for news and current affairs programs. The *7.45 am News* on ABC Local Radio achieved a five-city average weekly reach of 1.1 million listeners (up 8% on the previous year). The combined weekly reach for *Early AM* on ABC Local Radio and *AM* on ABC Radio National and ABC Local Radio was 1.41 million listeners, up 9% on the previous year.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>32</sup> OzTAM data May 2009.

<sup>33</sup> WebTrends, OnDemand, May 2009.

<sup>34</sup> WebTrends Analytics, downloads of MP3 files, from January – June 2009.

<sup>35</sup> Nielsen Online, Home and Work Panel, ABC Custom Reports 2008–09.

<sup>36</sup> OzTAM data, 2007–08 and 2008–09, five-city metro.

<sup>37</sup> Nielsen, five metropolitan cities, 2007–08 and 2008–09.





## Appreciation Survey

In June 2009, the ABC commissioned Newspoll to conduct the 10th annual ABC Appreciation Survey. These surveys provide an overview of community attitudes towards the ABC. They allow the Corporation to assess the value placed on its services by the Australian public and the delivery of its Charter obligations. Newspoll conducted similar surveys in 1998 and 1999, and annually from 2002. The 2009 research was conducted by telephone and derived from a national sample of 1 900 people aged 14 years and over.

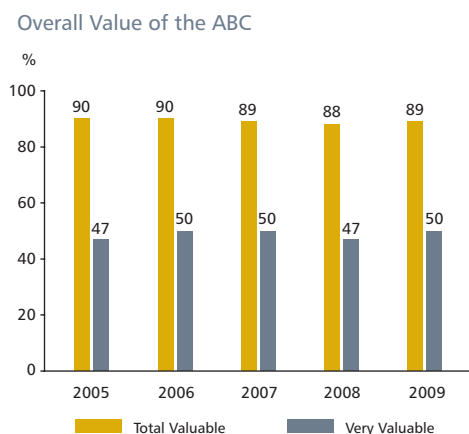
Overall, the 2009 survey results show the community's view of the ABC has remained consistent over time. Nine-in-ten (89%) Australians continue to believe the ABC provides a valuable service to the community and half (50%) believe it provides a "very valuable" service. A generally positive view about the ABC is shared by men and women, all age groups and both city and country/regional residents.

In terms of year-on-year changes in perception, there was a small increase in the proportion of females believing the ABC does not provide a valuable service, up from 4% to 7%. There was an increase in the proportion of 25–34 year olds believing that the ABC is very valuable, up from 48% to 59%. Over the longer time frame of the past two years, the proportion of 18–24 year olds who regard the ABC and its services as very valuable has been lower than in the previous two years.

## Radio

The majority of Australians continue to describe the quality of programming on ABC Radio as "good" with year-on-year results up from 65% in 2008 to 69% in 2009. In terms of the amount of programming people like to listen to, again the majority, 62%, believe that ABC Radio does a "good job" on this dimension. In terms of this dimension, overall, there has been no change in community attitude compared to 2008.

The improvement in community perceptions about the quality of ABC Radio has been driven largely by the segment of audience classified as



Based on the total sample aged 14 years and over. "Don't Know" and "Not Valuable" responses are not displayed. Source: Newspoll. ABC Appreciation Survey 2009.



Paul Petran, Presenter of Radio National's *Music Deli*, wraps up the "Under an Eastern Moon" concert produced by the ABC with Multicultural Arts Victoria in June 2009; The audience joins in at the ABC Community Concert at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl in Melbourne; Lal Skipworth and Lil Baker at the Esperance Museum, WA, play and yodel their "Skylab song" at a special Outside Broadcast marking the 30th anniversary of Skylab.

non-listeners.<sup>38</sup> This implies that the improved perceptions relate to some occasional usage of ABC Radio, or something positive these people have seen or heard about ABC Radio. Analysis by geography reveals that the improvement was most pronounced in Victoria and Queensland. Newspoll posits that these improved perceptions may relate to positive reports about ABC Radio's role in covering this year's fire and flood disasters in these states and/or, increased listening during a particular period because of these same events.

<sup>38</sup> While the *non* ABC Radio listeners segment includes those who never listen to ABC Radio, it would also include some people who do listen, but comparatively infrequently.

Radio-Quality of Programming



Based on the total sample aged 14 years and over. "Don't Know" responses are not displayed. Source: Newspoll. ABC Appreciation Survey 2009.

■ Total Good    ■ Total Poor  
■ Very Good    ■ Very Poor    → Statistically significant change





Professor Adrian Franklin, Niccole Warren and Gordon Brown, regular panellists on *Collectors*; Marieke Hardy, regular guest panellist on *First Tuesday Bookclub*; The BBC's pathology drama, *Silent Witness*; Richard Armitage and Hermione Nomis in the high-suspense spy drama *Spooks*.

Over a longer period of time, improvements in community perceptions about the quality of ABC Radio were recorded among those aged 18–24 up from 58% in 2007 to 70% in 2009. On this same dimension, perceptions about ABC Radio improved among those living in the five major mainland capital cities and those living in country and regional Australia. The proportion of capital city dwellers believing ABC Radio does a good job in terms of the quality of programming rose from 60% in 2006 to 66% in 2009, while over the same period the proportion of country and regional residents with this view rose from 66% to 73%.

Generally, perceptions about ABC Radio and commercial radio are more similar than perceptions about ABC Television and commercial television. This similarity is borne of the more diverse and fragmented radio market. On the measures of quality and amount of programming people like to listen to, commercial radio attracts a higher level of negative sentiment than ABC Radio.

### Television

Consistent with previous surveys, the majority of Australians (82%) believe that ABC Television provides quality programming and 70% believe it does a “good job” in terms of the number of programs it provides that they personally like to watch. These attitudes remain far more favourable for the ABC than for commercial television.

Compared to the previous year there have been no overall changes in attitudes towards ABC Television. Perceptions about the quality of ABC Television continue to be fairly uniform across demographic groups and year-on-year there were no changes in attitudes in any segment. Over a longer timeframe the overall level of positive sentiment among the 25–34 year old age group (85%) is up compared with 2006 (77%), while the small proportion of those aged 50 and over who regard ABC Television as providing poor quality programming was up slightly from 6% in 2006 to 11% in 2009.

In terms of the number of programs people like to watch, 70% believe ABC Television does a good job compared with only 48% for commercial television. For ABC Television, year-on-year, there was an increase in the proportion of women who believe that it does a “very good job” at providing shows they like to watch, along with an increase in the number of 35–49 year olds who feel it does a “poor job” on this dimension, up from 14% to 20%. Over a longer period of time there has been an improvement in number of 14–17 year olds





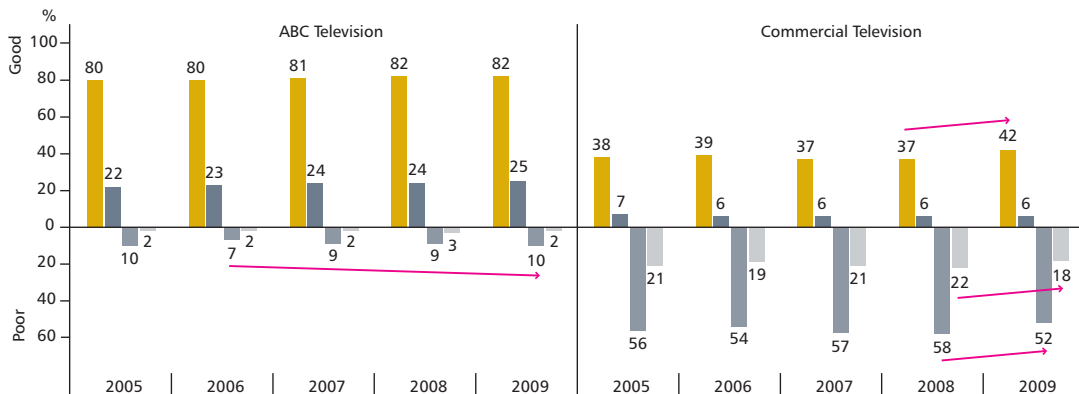
who feel ABC Television has done a “very good job” at providing programs they like to watch, up from 16% in 2006 to 27% in 2009. Since 2007 there has been a decline in the proportion of “light” users.<sup>39</sup> ABC viewers who believe ABC Television does a “good job” on this dimension is down from 72% in 2007 to 66% in 2009.

The survey includes a measure of perceptions about Australian-made television shows. Perceptions on this dimension improved for both the ABC and commercial television, with the

view that the ABC is doing a “good job” up from 75% in 2008 to 79% in 2009, and commercial television up year-on-year from 62% to 69%. The 2009 survey revealed some other year-on-year improvements in community perceptions about commercial television. For example the proportion of the community believing commercial television provides quality programming rose from 37% to 42%, while the number believing it provides shows they like to watch rose from 44% to 48%. Analysing these results in conjunction with results on perceptions about Australian-made television shows indicates that the improved perceptions about commercial television are likely to be driven by the popularity of a range of new Australian programs on commercial television.

<sup>39</sup> To explore attitudes according to people’s usage of ABC services, Newspoll segment the sample into *heavy*, *light* and *non* ABC users. The segments are based on respondents’ self assessment. A *heavy* ABC user consumes six or more hours a week of ABC Television (and/or ABC Radio); a *light* user less than six hours a week; and a *non* user consumes no ABC Television (or ABC Radio) in a given week.

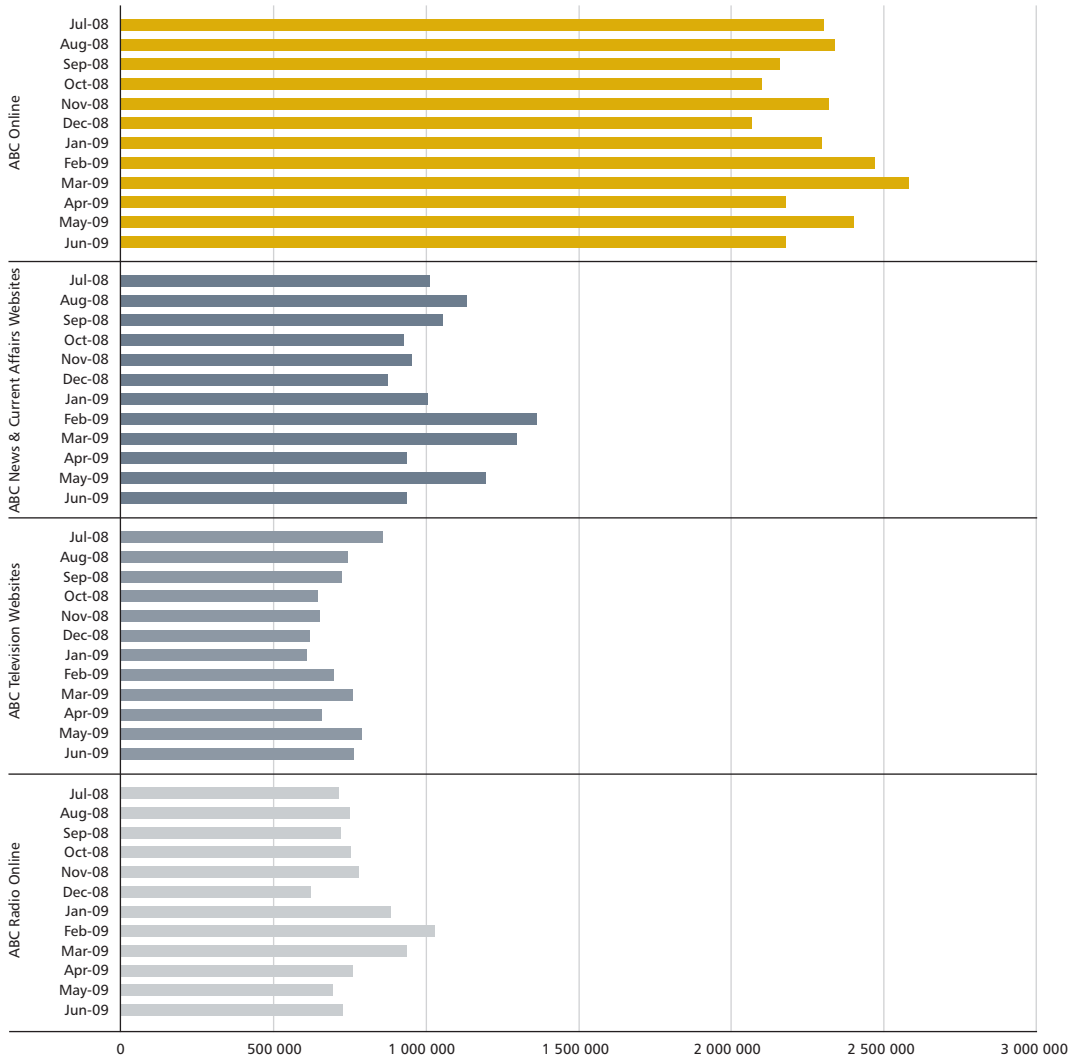
### Television–Quality of Programming



Based on the total sample aged 14 years and over. “Don’t know” responses are not displayed. Source: Newspoll. ABC Appreciation Survey 2009.

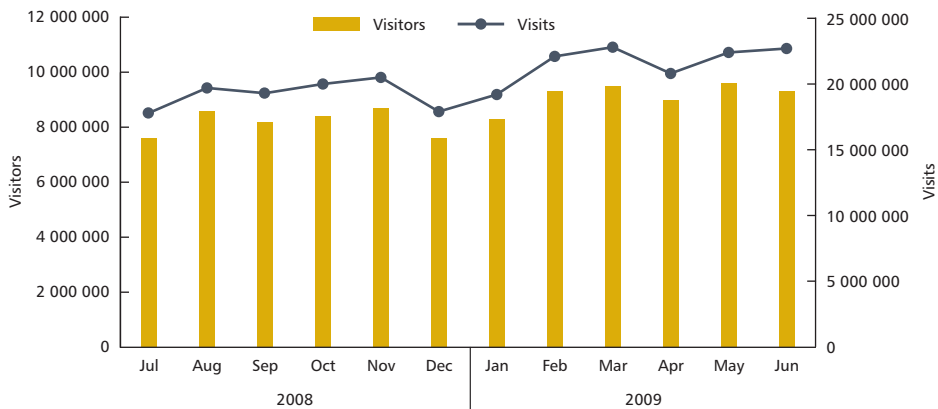
■ Total Good    ■ Total Poor  
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ABC Online Monthly Audience Reach 2008–09, Major Websites

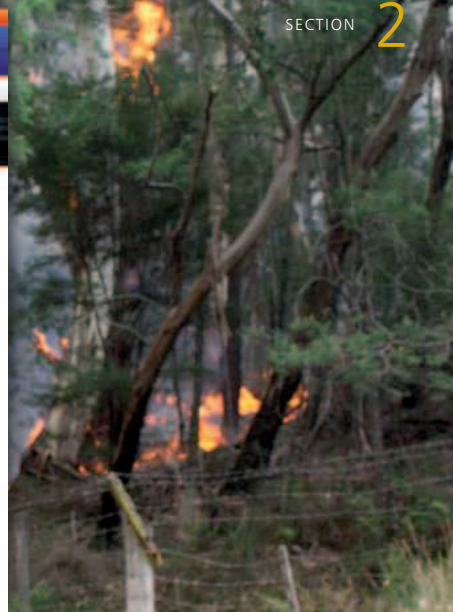


Source: Nielsen Online, AU-Monthly-Home and Work Panel

ABC Online Monthly Visitors and Visits 2008–09



Source: WebTrends OnDemand



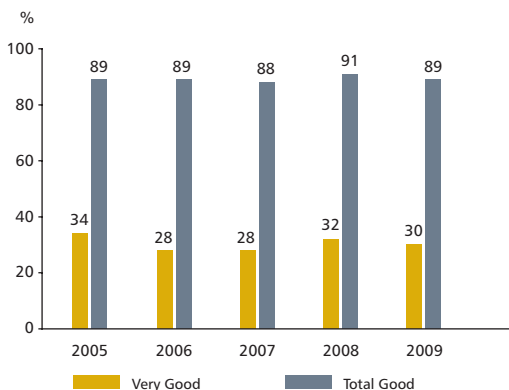
**Online**

The proportion of the community “ever using” ABC Online increased this year to 31% compared to 25% in 2008. The growth reflects increased use of the site among occasional users. Year-on-year there was no change in the proportion who use the site more regularly (at least once a week), though over a longer time frame, there has been gradual growth in the number of regular users.

Consistent with previous results nine-in-ten (89%) believe the quality of content on ABC Online is “good” while the same proportion say the website does a “good job” in terms of the amount of content it provides on things they use it for. The

survey results show that the website contributes to the consumption of other ABC content and that the site extends the life of ABC content in a variety of ways. There was strong growth in the usage of video content, with the proportion of users stating they had used video in the past three months up from 41% last year to 48% this year and the number downloading ABC Television programs up from 10% last year to 18%. Listening to ABC Radio remained popular, with 39% of ABC Online users having listened in the past three months. Other activities engaging audiences on ABC Online included usage of the following in the past three months: playing games either by themselves or with others (21%); participating in a forum or posting comments (8%); and a small number had uploaded photos, video or music to ABC Online (1%).

ABC Website—Quality of Content\*



\* Based on those aged 14 years and over who ever visit the website. Does not include “Don’t Know” or “Poor” responses. Source: Newspoll. ABC Appreciation Survey 2009.

**Coverage of Country News and Information**

Community perceptions about coverage of country news and information continue to be far more favourable for the ABC than for commercial media. This remains apparent among people in the capital cities and people living in country and regional areas. The vast majority of Australians (83%, up from 80% last year) believe the ABC does a “good job” covering country and regional issues, compared with 48% for commercial media.



### News and Current Affairs Content

The research explored community perceptions about the amount of coverage given by the ABC to specific news and current affairs issues. Consistent with all previous surveys, on nearly all issues a majority of ABC users<sup>40</sup> believed the amount of coverage by the ABC was “about right”. Year-on-year there were a number of small improvements in perceptions that the ABC was getting the amount of coverage “about right” for sports news, national security and defence, immigration issues, health care, social welfare issues, coverage of accidents/disasters, financial matters affecting average Australians, business and finance news (it is noted that this issue had previously been surveyed as “business news”) and, compared to 2007, industrial relations issues.

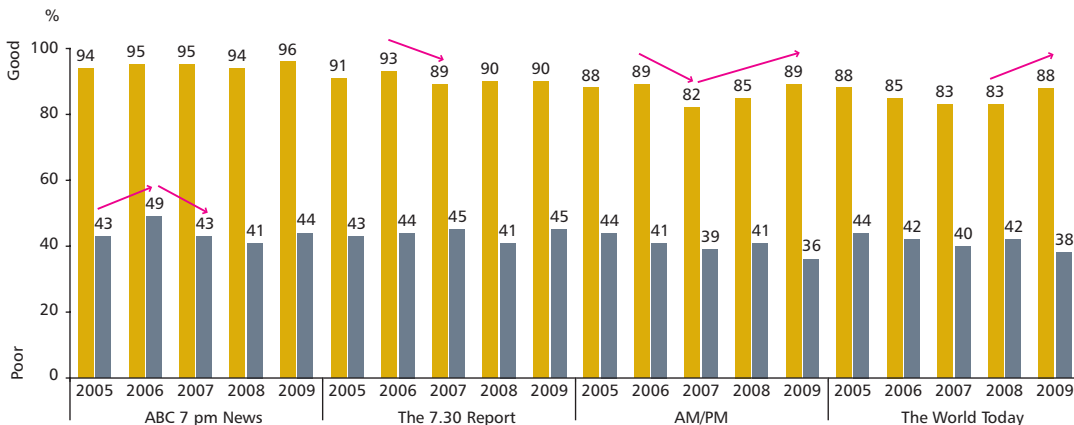
<sup>40</sup> ABC users, for this analysis, are defined as those who say they use ABC Television, ABC Radio or ABC Online as a source of news and current affairs at least once a fortnight.

### Other Specific Charter Obligations

As found in previous years, the majority of Australians believe the ABC is doing a “good job” in meeting various other Charter obligations. Compared with the 2008 results, there were several small positive shifts of two to three percentage points in a number of areas. In a few cases these represent statistically significant improvements on the 2008 results, specifically: broadcasting programs that are different from commercial media, up from 89% to 92%; having a good balance between broadcasting programs of wide appeal, and broadcasting programs that appeal to people with special interests, up from 83% to 86%; and broadcasting programs that reflect the cultural diversity of the Australian community, up from 80% to 83%.

Compared with the 2007 results, there were two areas where statistically significant improvements were recorded: being balanced and even-handed when reporting news and current affairs, up from 79% to 83%; and broadcasting programs of an educational nature, up from 85% to 88%.

ABC Program Does a Good Job of Being Balanced and Even-Handed



Based on those aged 14 years and over who ever watch/listen to the respective program. Does not include “Don’t Know” or “Poor” responses. Source: Newspoll. ABC Appreciation Survey 2009.

■ Total Good Job     — Statistically significant change  
■ Very Good Job

# ABC Services

In achieving its vision the ABC delivers comprehensive programs and services which reflect the interests and aspirations of diverse Australian communities.



## ABC Radio

- Four national radio networks, comprising ABC Radio National, ABC Classic FM, *triple j* and ABC NewsRadio (on the Parliamentary and News Network).
- Nine metropolitan radio stations, in capital cities and Newcastle, New South Wales.
- 51 regional radio stations throughout Australia.
- ABC Radio National, ABC Classic FM, *triple j* and ABC NewsRadio, as well as some of the metropolitan and regional radio services are also available via digital satellite subscription services.
- *dig*, *dig jazz* and *dig country*—three music-based services available via the internet. *dig* and *dig jazz* are also available on free-to-air digital and subscription services.

## ABC Television

- ABC1, a national analog television service.
- Digital television with analog simulcast of ABC1 from 273 transmitters around Australia.
- ABC2, the ABC's second free-to-air digital television channel.
- iView, an internet-only television service.
- Local television in each State and Territory.

## ABC Online and Other Platforms

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

## ABC Commercial

- 43 ABC Shops
- 117 ABC Centres throughout Australia
- ABC Shop Online
- Customer Delivery Service (fax, telephone and mail orders).

## ABC International

- Radio Australia, an international radio and online service broadcasting in seven languages by shortwave, satellite and terrestrial rebroadcast arrangements to Asia and the Pacific.
- Australia Network, an international television and online service, broadcasting via satellite and rebroadcast arrangements to 44 nations in Asia and the Pacific.
- ABC International Projects, assisting media organisations internationally with strategic advice, training, mentoring and technical support.

### Transmission

- 900 terrestrial transmitters around Australia for analog television services, including Self-Help and Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme (BRACS) facilities.
- 1 161 terrestrial transmitters around Australia for analog radio services, including Self-Help and BRACS.
- 328 terrestrial transmitters around Australia for digital terrestrial television services, including Self-Help, which also deliver the radio services *dig* and *dig jazz*.
- As a major funding initiative ABC NewsRadio coverage is currently being expanded in regional centres with populations of 10 000 and above. Over a three-year period (2006–09) approximately 70 ABC NewsRadio transmission services will be installed to deliver a potential increase in population coverage from 78% to 95%.
- A digital satellite service to remote homesteads and communities, within Australia, carrying ABC analog television, ABC Radio National, ABC Classic FM and *triple j*, nine different regional radio services (two each for the Northern Territory, Queensland and Western Australia, one each for New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria) and ABC NewsRadio and Parliamentary broadcasts on the Parliamentary and News Network.
- ABC Television retransmission on various subscription television platforms, including Foxtel, Optus TV, Austar, TransACT and Neighbourhood Cable.

- Australia Network, transmitted on the Intelsat 5, Intelsat 8, Intelsat 10 satellites and via rebroadcast arrangements in 44 countries across Asia and the Pacific. Also via PanAmSat 2, PanAmSat 8, AsiaSat3s satellites and via rebroadcasts in countries across Asia and the Pacific.
- Radio Australia services via shortwave transmission from Brandon in Queensland, Shepparton in Victoria, Darwin and the Intelsat 5, Intelsat 8 and Intelsat 10 satellites in association with Australia Network. Also via 24-hour FM services in 14 key Asia-Pacific centres, rebroadcasts on local stations and outlets in countries across Asia and the Pacific, including Sky Pacific; and in Europe and North America via the World Radio Network with outlets including Sky Digital (United Kingdom) and Sirius Radio (United States). For Radio Australia frequencies, see Appendix 24 (page 237).

ABC International Bureaux and News Correspondents





## ABC Broadcasting Coverage

Proportion of the population able to receive transmissions from ABC broadcasting services.

	Australia	NSW/ACT	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT
Analog Television	98.29%	99.25%	98.90%	97.66%	97.06%	98.95%	95.15%	79.86%
Digital Television (includes <i>dig</i> and <i>dig jazz</i> )	97.66%	98.46%	99.18%	96.67%	95.88%	98.23%	96.37%	72.57%
ABC Local Radio	99.38%	99.70%	99.81%	99.60%	98.69%	99.67%	99.34%	81.44%
ABC Radio National	98.67%	99.28%	99.51%	98.29%	96.51%	99.59%	99.19%	80.49%
ABC Classic FM	95.95%	97.76%	98.13%	94.94%	90.06%	95.24%	95.81%	67.43%
<i>triple j</i>	95.46%	97.37%	98.06%	93.78%	89.27%	94.97%	95.81%	67.43%
ABC NewsRadio	90.22%	89.06%	89.17%	92.39%	87.78%	97.57%	95.05%	71.92%
Domestic Shortwave	0.95%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.15%	0.00%	86.55%

Notes: Population derived from Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2006 Census data.



# ABC in the Community

The ABC serves as a “town square” for Australians, providing reliable information to encourage a meaningful, national conversation, and creating a forum in which everyone—not just those in public life—can be heard. Playing an important role in the lives of all Australians is a fundamental part of the ABC’s mission.



FOR OVER 75 YEARS, the ABC has been part of local communities across Australia. As the national public broadcaster, not bound by a need for profitability, the ABC is able to deliver dedicated services to all areas. The presence of the ABC in 51 regional and nine metropolitan centres gives the ABC the unique ability to engage with local communities, not only through content and programming, but through ABC staff who live and work in those communities.

ABC broadcasting, online and mobile services are unique in their extensive reach to both communities of interest and to geographic communities, throughout Australia and internationally.

## Emergency Broadcasting

Floods, fires, cyclones and storms directly affected a significant number of Australians in 2008–09 and the devastating impacts were seen and felt by many more.

The ABC worked closely with emergency services to provide essential information and support to local communities during the Victorian bushfires, which killed 173 people and destroyed thousands of homes. Rolling coverage and emergency broadcasts were mounted by Local Radio stations in Horsham, Bendigo, Wodonga, Sale and Melbourne. The ABC presented a free, family-focused concert at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl on 1 March 2009 to reflect on and celebrate the resilience and remarkable spirit of the Victorian community and to recognise the efforts of emergency service providers and volunteers.

In South Australia, program teams in Adelaide, Port Pirie and Port Lincoln provided comprehensive coverage of a major bushfire at Port Lincoln which destroyed a number of commercial buildings and threatened homes over a 15-hour period.

ABC Townsville broadcast extended emergency coverage including overnight warnings and local afternoon updates during and following Tropical Cyclone Charlotte, giving out vital information on local flooding and road closures. ABC Cairns also covered Charlotte with hourly weather updates and special extended programming for the Far North, Mt Isa and the rest of the state.



The ABC held its first Emergency Expo in Townsville on 1 November 2008, bringing together many of the agencies and groups that help the Townsville community prepare, survive and recover from a weather emergency; *Gardening Australia's* Josh Byrne went to Broome for Science Week 2008 and made an organic vegie garden that flourishes to this day with class 4M at St Mary's College.

105.7 ABC Darwin provided vital information to listeners as the first cyclone of the season threatened communities there and in Western Australia and worked closely with Local Radio in Western Australia to ensure warnings for Cyclone Billy reached listeners in Wadeye and communities across East Kimberley. The station also covered flooding in the Barkly region, providing vital updates on the state of the highway connecting Queensland and the Northern Territory which was cut for two-and-a-half weeks.

Local Radio stations held Bushfire Awareness Days in November in conjunction with local fire and emergency services organisations to help listeners prepare for the fire season with programs and online features drawing attention to risk minimisation and preventative measures in the lead up to summer.

Similarly, Cyclone Emergency Awareness days were held in northern Queensland to help communities prepare for a major event and explore ways to protect themselves in an emergency. ABC Far North radio and online focused on cyclone preparedness with ABC Townsville hosting its inaugural ABC Emergency Expo and ABC Cairns launching Big Picture Day, with *Breakfast* and Rural programs broadcasting from the Cairns Esplanade with Emergency Management Queensland.

ABC Local Radio is partnering the Red Cross by promoting the "Red Cross Rediplan" project which encourages people to prepare a written emergency plan. ABC Local Radio is broadcasting

information about the initiative and programs are interviewing the Red Cross about this initiative to keep Australians safe.

It remains a priority in 2009–10 to continue to develop the ABC's role as emergency broadcaster, taking into account lessons learned and new opportunities identified to improve and make more effective the service provided by the ABC.

## Connecting with Australian Communities

The Corporation supports and participates in local community events, on both a large and small scale.

World Youth Day events and surrounding stories were covered across a number of radio networks and ABC News. 702 ABC Sydney *Weekends* broadcast live from the destination of the pilgrims' walk and evening vigil in Sydney, and shared a field reporter with ABC NewsRadio for the duration of the Pope's visit. Radio National *Breakfast* covered feature stories and the network's specialist religion programs, *The Religion Report* and *The Spirit of Things*, covered a range of events and related issues. *triple j's* news and information program, *Hack* presented a week long "Belief" feature looking at the role of faith in the lives of young people. The program focused on issues such as the science of belief; lesser known, emerging religions;





Richard Aedy interviewing Margaret Robertson and Robert Sexton at an Outside Broadcast of *Life Matters* at The Kodja Place Museum, Kojonup, WA; Radio Australia's Adelaide Ng broadcasting live from the Phnom Penh Water Festival; Australia Network's Tania Nugent in Vanuatu interviewing 26 Roots, the winners of Radio Australia's *Pacific Break* music competition; Australia Network launched its new on-air look in Kuala Lumpur in April 2009 by wrapping a local bus in the network's colours, featuring the theme: *From our world to yours*.

whether belief and reason are compatible; losing or gaining religion.

In July 2008, the inaugural 2008 Marvellous Regional Museum Awards were presented by ABC Radio National in partnership with Museums Australia. The Awards recognise the vital role played by regional museums in the cultural lives of their communities. The 2008 overall prize winner, and winner of the Small Museum category, was the Kodja Place Visitor and Interpretive Centre in Kojonup, Western Australia.

In July 2008, 1233 ABC Newcastle's Aaron Kearney travelled to Papua New Guinea as part of the *Camp Quality Kokoda Challenge 2008*, and walked the gruelling 96 kilometres over seven days, sharing his experiences with listeners via daily live crosses and a series of radio and online packages following the walkers.

In August 2008, the South Australian and Victorian *Country Hour* teams combined to present a major radio and online Outside Broadcast to highlight the crisis facing the lower lakes of the Murray River system. The program was broadcast from Meningie on the shore of the dying Lake Albert and included crosses into Local Radio in Melbourne and stations

in Mildura, Bendigo, Shepparton and Wodonga to outline the implications of severe water restrictions and drought for communities along the Murray River. Video, audio, text and images were posted online as the special 90 minute broadcast was aired.

In October 2008, 783 ABC Alice Springs supported the Masters Games in Alice Springs, holding a series of Outside Broadcasts from various events.

During March 2009, the 720 ABC Perth *Breakfast* program broadcast from five towns in five days in regional Western Australia. The program met and interviewed dozens of people from all walks of life, showing the incredible diversity of Western Australia. The listeners nominated places to go and people the *Breakfast* team should meet. The stories captured were broadcast on air from 6 am through to 6 pm across all programs. It was a cross-media event with content on air, online and blogs.

In May 2009, marking the famous Ord Valley Muster in Kununurra, the Kimberley *Morning* team travelled across the top of Western Australia to meet the characters along the way and broadcast live from all of the festivities.

A range of innovative broadcasts were conducted by ABC Rural, including a week-long "surf and turf" tour between the Great Sandy Desert and the Indian Ocean in Western Australia; a series of outside broadcasts along the Slim Dusty Way in New South Wales; stories looking at medical improvements in remote communities west of



Katherine; a remote pearl farm in the Northern Territory; and from flooded highways between Queensland and the Northern Territory border.

The ABC's presence at a number of community events was highlighted by the attendance of the ABC Exhibition Trailer. The Trailer crossed the continent and attended 18 events including the Alice Springs and Darwin Shows, the Mt Isa Rodeo, Gardening Australia Expos, Adelaide, Perth and Sydney Royal Shows and regional community ABC Events.

### International communities

Through Australia Network and Radio Australia, the ABC is also connecting with the international community in Asia and the Pacific.

In July 2008, ABC International's Director, Murray Green led a team from both networks to Pacific Island countries. In the capitals of Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji and Samoa, community leaders' briefings were held with local representatives from government, business and Non-Government Organisations. Audience feedback forums were also held in each capital, and Papua New Guinea's second city of Lae. Radio Australia and Australia Network gained invaluable insights into the interests and needs of their Pacific audiences.

In November 2008, Radio Australia broadcast from the pan-Pacific music festival, Fest'Napuan, in Vanuatu. The winners of Radio Australia's *Pacific Break* competition—open to unsigned musicians

from across the Pacific Islands—played for the crowd and Radio Australia's listeners across the Pacific. Reggae band 26 Roots (pronounced Two Six Roots), from the remote island of Santo, were already a well-known story in their small community. Eight unemployed youths, using a collection of rough instruments, including a drum kit made from plastic containers and tin-cans, began to forge a rich, home-grown sound. Their community raised funds to help buy the band "modern" instruments. 26 Roots won the *Pacific Break* competition with their original song "Broken Promises".

In the same month, Radio Australia was broadcasting live on stage over two days from the annual Water Festival in Phnom Penh, on the banks of the Tonle Sap and Mekong River. The Cambodian crowd were treated to a bilingual mix of music, interviews and a karaoke competition hosted by Seda Douglas from the Khmer service and Adelaide Ng from the English service's *Breakfast* program.

Australia Network launched its new on-air look in Kuala Lumpur in April 2009 by wrapping a local bus in the network's colours, featuring the theme: *From our world to yours*. To mark the bus sponsorship, Australia Network hosted members of the Malaysian media to an Anzac Day Australian Rules Football carnival, organised by the Australian High Commission. Among the activities was an "Auskick" Australian Rules football clinic for children. The highlight of the day was the Aussie Rules football competition between the Malaysian Warriors, Singapore Wombats and the Australian Army.

# ABC People

The ABC relies on the experience, skill and dedication of its workforce in order to make and deliver content to ABC audiences in Australia and overseas.

IN 2008–09 THE TOTAL number of full-time equivalent staff increased marginally to 4 535 (from 4 499 in 2007–08). The composition of the workforce remained virtually unchanged with a gender balance of 51% men and 49% women, 10.8% of employees from non-English speaking backgrounds, Indigenous employees making up 1.2% and people with a disability representing 8.9% of staff.

The ABC is an independent media organisation for all Australians. Our values are the foundation of our work.

## Integrity

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

## Respect

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

## Collegiality

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

## Innovation

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

## Our Values

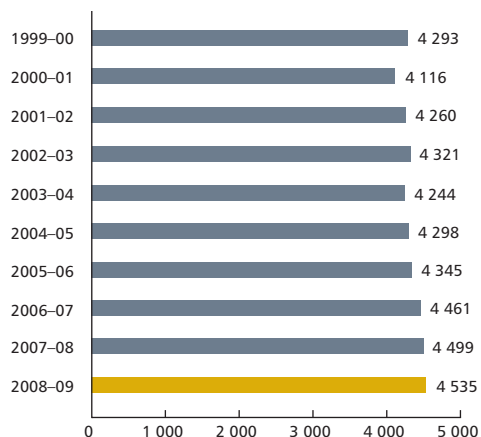
### ABC Values

In March 2009, the Corporation introduced a new set of ABC Values that capture what it means to work in the ABC. They act as a filter through which organisational behaviour including behaviour towards other employees and towards the Corporation, and decision-making, is interpreted.

The new values were developed after an extensive staff consultation process. A total of 532 staff participated in 55 Focus Groups around Australia. A further 47 wiki entries were recorded. The ABC Values are expressed in the Values Statement above.

Information about ABC Values is available on the ABC Values intranet site, which also provides staff with an opportunity to directly email the People and Learning Division with questions or feedback.

ABC Staff Numbers (Full-Time Equivalent) 2008–09







The Annual ABC Leaders Conference is an opportunity for the Managing Director and his senior management to discuss the ABC's strategic priorities.

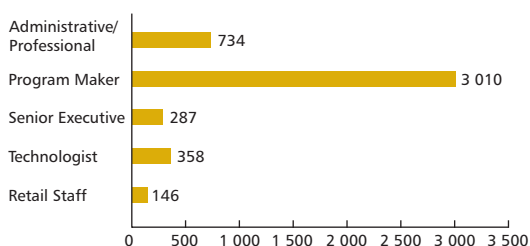
## Organisational culture

In 2008–09, the ABC commenced a process of examining the impact of leadership style on staff, and testing the existing leadership culture against a series of external and internal benchmarks.

The purpose of this work is to identify and establish a “preferred” workplace culture, which will be visibly represented at all levels of leadership and management. By embedding ABC Values, and promoting constructive leadership behaviours aligned to those values, the ABC aims to build a strong and positive workplace culture in which all staff can do their best.

The project is underpinned by a suite of tools and consultancy support from an external provider which specialises in strengthening individual and organisational effectiveness. In May 2009, briefings began for the Organisational Cultural Inventory rollout. The inventory is designed to take a sample of the ABC's leadership culture, overall and divisionally, with a view to redressing any barriers to a more constructive and enabling culture.

ABC Staff by Job Group (Full Time Equivalent) 2008–09



## Building and developing talent

In 2008–09, the ABC continued to introduce training and development programs for its staff, focusing on talent management and succession planning.

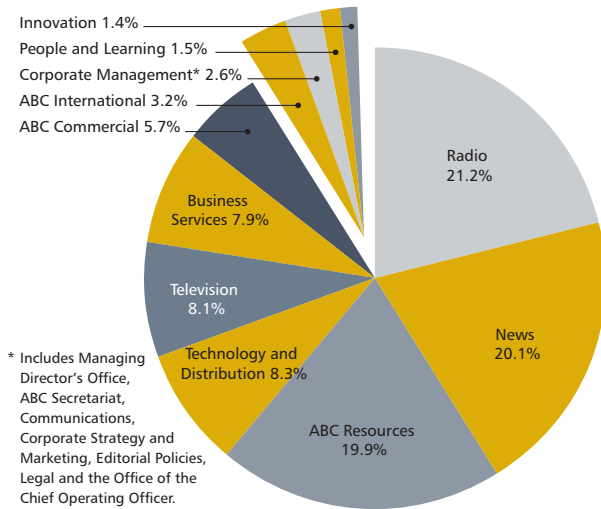
In January 2009, the ABC completed a nine-month, nation-wide process of identifying mission-critical leadership roles, identifying potential successors and building a talent pool to develop the next generation of ABC leaders. People and Learning are working closely with divisions to develop personal development plans for those individuals.

The 2009 ABC Managers program is a national, cross-divisional program designed to provide employees with the skills needed to make the transition from working with a team, to managing a team. The six-month program is designed to assist those in their first management role or to provide greater development for existing managers who have not had the opportunity of formal management training. A Diploma of Management is awarded on successful completion through the ABC Registered Training Organisation.

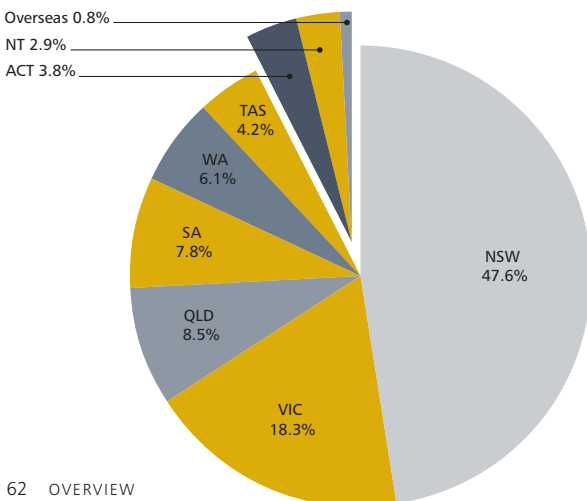
For those who occupy, or have the high potential to occupy, a role critical to the ABC's future, a new program was launched in 2008–09. In August 2008, 15 senior ABC managers commenced a two-year Accelerated Leadership Program, conducted by the Accelerated Learning



Distribution of ABC Staff by Division 2008–09



Distribution of ABC Staff By Region 2008–09



Laboratory at the University of New South Wales. Participants were selected against criteria of merit and potential by a panel chaired by the Managing Director. The program focuses on personal performance and assists participants develop the skills and flexibility needed to provide effective leadership and management.

The ABC is gaining a reputation internationally as a leader in the field of trauma and resilience training. The value of the trauma-awareness program the News Division developed became evident in supporting staff during and after the Victorian bushfires. More than 600 staff from across the ABC have attended awareness sessions and 38 have been trained as peer supporters.

The total number of hours of training and development undertaken by ABC staff increased by 40.8%, to 99 484 hours (previously 70 658 hours for 2007–08). This included nationally recognised training through the ABC Registered Training Organisation, which issued 75 full qualifications and 13 statements of attainment, totalling 749 national competencies.

### Providing opportunities

The ABC continued to successfully search for and develop new talent.

In 2008–09, the Technology and Distribution Division took on three electronics apprentices in Adelaide, Canberra and Hobart. Three Graduate Technologists commenced work and training activities in Sydney, before undertaking placements



Producer Albert Koomen, camera operator Stephen Cavenagh and sound recordist Andrew Boys take a break during a *Sunday Arts* shoot in Darwin; ABC sound recordist Daniel O'Connor and producer/cameraman Neale Maude in the Arctic circle for *Four Corners*, "The Tipping Point"; The Producers of *ABC News Breakfast*.

in Adelaide, Brisbane and Darwin. Four Women in Engineering (WIE) Scholarships were awarded in the last 12 months. The News Division appointed nine cadets, including one sports news cadet.

In 2008, the ABC partnered with IBM and the Reserve Bank of Australia to deliver in-house "Springboard" programs for women in Sydney and Melbourne between September and November. These career and personal development programs for women in non-managerial positions were attended by 24 ABC employees.

The Andrew Olle Scholarship for 2008–09 was awarded to Oscar McLaren, a bi-media journalist in the ABC's Sydney newsroom. The scholarship, founded by the ABC in 1996 to commemorate the life and work of esteemed journalist and broadcaster, Andrew Olle, provides the opportunity for talented young journalists to develop their skills under the guidance of experienced journalists who are leaders in their field.

In March 2009, the Donald McDonald ABC Scholarship to the Reuters Institute of Oxford was awarded to Eleanor Hall, presenter of *The World Today* on ABC Radio. The Reuters Institute program gives experienced journalists from around the world an opportunity to develop their skills further.

### Epidemiological Study

In 2008–09, the Cancer Council New South Wales concluded its investigation into the incidence of breast cancer in ABC staff and former staff across Australia. The study examined whether ABC

employees, employed by the ABC between 1 January 1994 and 31 July 2007 have an elevated risk of developing breast cancer. The final report will be presented to the ABC in August 2009.

### Workplace Giving

In June 2009, the ABC Workplace Giving program was launched. ABC Workplace Giving is an opportunity for staff to give to selected charities from their pre-tax salary each fortnight. It effectively replaces a staff-initiative called the "Care Club", which operated for 26 years, predominantly in Sydney and with the majority of money going to Sydney-based charities.

The Managing Director, senior executives and staff all recognised that there were many benefits in expanding the Care Club to a Workplace Giving Program, to be inclusive of staff in all States and Territories and for charities in local communities to benefit from the generosity of ABC staff.

ABC Workplace Giving is a simple and effective way for employees in every State and Territory to further assist and connect with their local communities through giving monetary donations and through offering support of various kinds to registered charities.





Alan Dowler at the viewfinder during Advanced Camera Training for Indigenous camera operators in Darwin; Jonathon Lee capturing sound for ABC News during the Victorian bushfires.

## Indigenous Culture in the ABC

The ABC's *Corporate Plan 2007–10* includes a commitment to achieving a target of 2% Indigenous employment. A number of initiatives were undertaken during 2008–09 in pursuit of that target.

In July 2008, the People and Learning Division conducted an Indigenous Employment Forum in Ultimo, New South Wales. The forum focused on current Indigenous recruitment and retention models which could be used to increase the ABC's performance in this area. Following the forum, a number of divisions agreed to target Indigenous employment opportunities in their areas.

Indigenous Employment Reference Groups have begun to be established in all divisions to identify and act on employment opportunities for current and potential Indigenous employees.

In late 2008, the ABC entered into a partnership with the New South Wales Department of Education to provide support for Indigenous secondary-school students in New South Wales to complete their final two years of schooling while undertaking work placements with the ABC. The scheme provides an incentive for young people to complete their schooling, and is also an avenue for students, and their families and communities, to have links with the ABC and foster future employment with the Corporation.

The ABC has continued to work towards the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) under the Reconciliation Australia official framework.

A RAP is a tool to assist organisations to build positive relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. The ABC is in a consultation phase with divisions, States and Territories and with the Bonner Committee to prepare its RAP, which will be launched in October 2009 at the annual Indigenous Staff Conference.

## Health and Safety

The ABC continues to improve in the management of occupational health and safety (OHS). There was a significant improvement in injury prevention and management in 2008–09, which was reflected in a workers' compensation premium rebate for 2008–09 and a significant decrease in the calculation rate of premiums for 2009–10.

2009 also saw the creation of the OHS Department within the People and Learning Division, and the appointment of an OHS Manager and Injury Prevention and Management Adviser. With a focus on prevention of workplace injury and illness the OHS department has developed a strategic OHS plan to be implemented across the ABC (see also Appendix 12, page 199).

# Commitment to a Greener Future

The ABC takes its environmental responsibilities seriously and aims to substantially lower its carbon footprint over the coming years.



New facilities at ABC Ultimo make commuting easier and safer for bike riders.

THE ABC HAS pledged to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions to 60% of 1997 levels by 2020 and to 40% of 1997 levels by 2050.

The ABC's "Green Futures" program commenced in 2006 and involves all staff Australia-wide. Each State has a "green committee" that is overseen by a national steering committee. In October 2008, the project employed its first full-time staff member to focus solely on the greening of the Corporation.

Initiatives over 2008–09 have focused on building design, maintenance, and encouraging staff to recycle and turn off their computers and lights.

The ABC tracks and publishes its progress through the *Green At Work* website and encourages other businesses to follow suit ([abc.net.au/greenatwork/](http://abc.net.au/greenatwork/)). The site provides tools and information for other organisations and individuals to reduce their own impact on the environment and shares lessons from the ABC's successes and failures in this area.

## Progress and Achievements

Overall, the ABC reduced its gross greenhouse gas emissions by 0.9% from 2007–08 levels. The net effect of the ABC's greenhouse gas emissions is 49 451 tonnes (using the Online System for Comprehensive Activity Reporting (OSCAR) conversion methodology).<sup>41</sup> The ABC improved its "green" performance in a number of areas:

- Overall energy intensity of all ABC Australian buildings was 858 megajoules per square metre per annum in 2008 and remained at this level in 2009
- Overall fleet fuel intensity for the ABC fleet was reduced by 6.5% from 3.75 megajoules per kilometre per annum in 2008 to 3.51 megajoules per kilometre per annum in 2009
- Electricity consumption decreased by 2.1% in 2008–09.<sup>42</sup>

Some of the significant initiatives undertaken in 2008–09 to reduce the ABC's greenhouse emissions and its impact on the environment included:

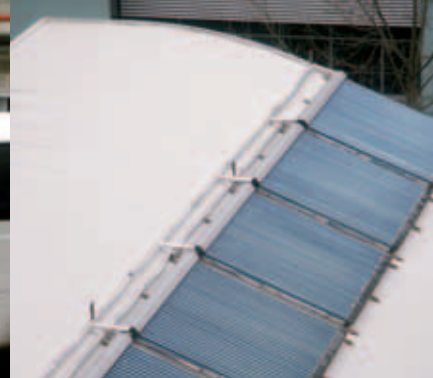
### Energy

Fluorescent lights were converted from T8 tubes to the more efficient T5 fluorescent tubes at Ultimo, Southbank, Adelaide, Darwin, Hobart, Launceston and Burnie.

Light switches were installed in offices to enable switching that is separate from general office

<sup>41</sup> 2008 reported emissions of 43 758 tonnes was based on the Energy Data Gathering and Reporting (EDGAR) conversion methodology.

<sup>42</sup> Based on 97.5% actual billed consumption and 2.5% forecast consumption pending account receipt.



Green initiatives introduced by the ABC include reducing fleet size, installing solar panels, separate switches for office lights, duplex printing and shower monitors.

lighting in Ultimo. Movement sensors have been used to automatically switch off lights in other sites. Similarly, timer switches were installed on office equipment in Ultimo to turn them off overnight and save power. Timers were also installed on televisions and boiling water units to regulate their usage.

Variable speed drives were installed on the main refrigeration chillers in the air-conditioning system in Ultimo to reduce electricity demand by up to 70%. The first stage of a project to replace the air-conditioning chiller plant at Southbank with high-efficiency chillers was completed.

## Recycling

The introduction of a co-mingled recycling system in Ultimo resulted in a reduction of waste going to landfill of 30%. Co-mingled recycling is also in place in Southbank, Canberra and Perth. Recycling for media such as CDs, DVDs, VHS, floppy disks and batteries is now in place in Ultimo.

The ABC recycled 4 153 items of print consumables (mostly printer cartridges) in 2008–09 saving 3.76 tonnes of waste going to landfill.

## Travel and transport

The ABC reduced the total number of kilometres flown by its staff for work purposes by 18% from 33.9 million kms in 2007–08 to 28.4 million kms in 2008–09. This in part reflects the installation of video conferencing facilities in all capital cities. The number of video conferencing facilities at both Ultimo and Southbank has doubled. Further, video conferencing over the internet has also been introduced on individual computers to facilitate face-to-face meetings between staff in different locations.

Substantial improvements have been made across the ABC fleet including the purchasing of hybrid vehicles and carbon offsets for fleet emissions. The fleet itself decreased by 75 vehicles.

In May 2009, bicycle facilities in Ultimo were upgraded to provide better facilities and security for bicycle riders. Two bicycle cages were installed as well as an air-pump, work-bench and drying-rack. Bicycle storage facilities in Sale, Victoria have also been upgraded for both security and safety. Facility upgrades in other areas are being explored. The ABC runs a Ride Share site on its intranet. Staff can use the site to organise a car-pool or to find a “bike buddy”.

Deliveries by suppliers of office products to ABC Sydney and Melbourne sites have been changed from daily to twice-weekly to reduce carbon emissions.

## Paper use

On average, 40% of the paper used by the ABC over the last 12 months was recycled paper. Most of this paper is 80–100% recycled from post-consumer waste. Double-sided printing has been set as the default print on all ABC printers.

The ABC is automating a significant number of its processes, resulting in a reduction in the amount of paper being used. Staff Australia-wide now have the option of switching from paper payslips to email payslips. Paper payslips will be phased out in 2010. A move to paperless forms for employment-related activities should be completed in 2010.

An average of 3 600 Remittance Advices and 1 500 Purchase Orders are now being emailed to vendors every month instead of being faxed. 92% of Travel Allowance forms are now approved electronically and processed by email, saving nearly 2 000 pieces of paper each month.





## Water

Water-efficient shower heads have been fitted at various sites Australia-wide. Twelve rainwater harvesting tanks have been installed around the country with a total collection capacity of 152 kl.

## Other initiatives

In conjunction with the Edible Gardening project, community garden projects have been started at all capital-city sites. Environmentally-friendly products are used in the wardrobe and make-up department at Ultimo to clean clothes, props, make-up and stage set-up including paints and cleaners.

The ABC participated in a number of events, including Earth Hour on 28 March 2009 and the 37th annual World Environment Day on 5 June 2009.

## Green at Work Website

The *Green at Work* website ([abc.net.au/greenatwork/](http://abc.net.au/greenatwork/)) details the actions, successes and failures of the ABC's own "greening" process and helps other organisations to green their workplaces by providing advice, tools and support online.

*Green at Work* is a publicly-available website for everyone, including small businesses and corporations. It is designed to be an informative and a straight-talking guide to going green at work.

The site offers a range of educational material about steps that can be taken to reduce the carbon footprint of local workplaces. It also carries substantial information on the energy and water usage of individual ABC sites over the past three years and tracks the ABC's progress in meeting its established targets.

## Future Steps

The ABC's Green Futures program is ongoing and aims to keep improving the ABC's environmental performance. The program is supported nationally and State and Territory-based "green committees" operate to encourage staff to change their attitudes and behaviour that will lead to improved environmental performance and to enable all staff to contribute to energy savings and improve environmental performance.

Work continues in relation to other opportunities including:

- Continued efforts to identify and implement "property-based" green initiatives
- Building a five-star green building at the ABC's new Brisbane headquarters
- Use of hybrid vehicles or vehicles with a Green Vehicle Guide (GVG) rating of greater than 10.5
- Working with suppliers to increase the use of environmentally-friendly products and services
- A continued effort to reduce both domestic and international air travel
- Encouraging staff to consider the environmental effects of their work choices
- Reaching out to regional ABC centres to include all levels of the ABC in its greening efforts.

# Corporate Governance

The ABC Board and management apply a corporate governance framework that aims to balance the ABC's performance as a creative media organisation, on the one hand, and its need to comply with the formal obligations of a statutory corporation on the other.

THROUGHOUT 2008–09, the ABC gave particular attention to editorial quality assurance, self-regulation and establishing a set of corporate values as the basis for the transition to a values-based organisational culture (see ABC People, page 60).

ABC corporate objectives, strategies, policies and activities derive from the requirements of the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation Act 1983* ("ABC Act"). In particular, Section 6 of the Act—the ABC Charter—outlines the functions of the Corporation; and Section 8 lays out the duties of the Board (see page 251). The Act expressly provides for both the editorial and administrative independence of the Corporation, thereby investing the Board with considerable discretion. In acknowledgement of that independence, the ABC accepts the obligation to meet the highest standards of public accountability.

## Strategy Setting

The Australian media are in a state of transition from a linear broadcasting world with few channels on scarce spectrum to a complex, multi-channel, multi-platform, digital world offering audiences a nearly limitless array of content. The ABC thus finds itself operating across two worlds: delivering traditional radio and television broadcasts to continuing strong audiences, while at the same time allocating resources to developing new services that meet the needs and expectations of the growing numbers of Australians who are using digital platforms and services.

Faced with these challenges, the Corporation has adopted a strategy for meeting its Charter obligations over the next five-to-ten years and maximising the public benefits it delivers to the Australian people that consists of:

- Fully embracing digital platforms
- More channels for diverse Australian content
- Creating a platform for Australian creativity
- Being the "town square" that hosts the national conversation
- Delivering the best possible news and information across all platforms
- Providing a voice in and for regional Australia and
- Engaging with Asia and the Pacific with relevant and authoritative content.

This strategy extends the long-term vision for public broadcasting articulated by the Corporation in the paper *The ABC in the Digital Age—Towards 2020*, which was prepared for the April 2008 Australia 2020 Summit.

It also informed the Corporation's *Triennial Funding Submission 2009–12*, which was presented to the Government in October 2008. The submission sought support for a range of initiatives consistent with the ABC's strategic directions. The Corporation received additional funding for several of these initiatives in the May 2009 Federal Budget.

On 15–16 June 2009, the ABC Board and Management held an off-site planning event to consider the Budget outcome and set the Corporation's directions for the coming year and the 2009–12 triennium. The event was highly successful and will now be held annually.

## Board Governance

The ABC Board held seven meetings during 2008–09.

Throughout much of the reporting period, the Corporation awaited the replacement of two Directors who completed their terms in the first half of 2008. This did not impede the Board's ability to perform its governance functions. The remaining six Directors, including the Managing Director, tended to deal with specific matters as a full Board rather than delegate them to committees. As a consequence, Board committees met less frequently.

In March 2009, Mr Michael Lynch CBE AM and Dr Julianne Schultz AM were appointed to the Board for five-year terms.

The Audit and Risk Committee met on five occasions. The Editorial Policies Committee and the Human Resources Committee did not meet during 2008–09, as all pertinent matters were dealt with by the full Board.

Further information about the ABC Board and its Committees is provided in Appendices 4 and 5 (page 192).

## Management Processes

The Managing Director chairs a monthly meeting of the Executive Leadership Group, comprising divisional Directors and the Directors of specialist support units reporting to him. This group also convenes briefly each Monday morning. The Content Leadership Group meets monthly to focus on content development issues, including cross-platform opportunities, audience trends and branding. The Chief Operating Officer chairs the third monthly forum, the Operations Support Group, made up of operations support divisions such as ABC Resources, Technology and Distribution, Business Services, People and Learning and Corporate Strategy and Marketing.

## Planning and Performance Reporting

Part IVA of the ABC Act requires the Board to prepare corporate plans. The ABC *Corporate Plan 2007–10* sets out Objectives and Key Directions for the Corporation. Performance reporting against the Corporate Plan occurs at three levels:

- Overall effectiveness of the Corporation in delivering public benefit to the Australian community—measured through the results of the annual Newspoll community appreciation survey (see page 46)
- Key Result Areas in relation to each of the four high-level corporate objectives laid out in the Plan—specific performance measures intended to highlight the most relevant factors of success (see page 121)
- Actions and Targets—the achievement or non-achievement of specific initiatives intended to improve the ABC's performance (see page 127).

During 2009–10, the Board will prepare a Corporate Plan for the period 2010–13.

## Production Review

In 2007, the ABC engaged the Boston Consulting Group to review its production activities and advise on the most efficient and effective production model and the appropriate balance between internal and external production. The consultants' final report proposed a number of initiatives to improve the efficiency of television production. In March 2008, following detailed evaluation of these proposals, the Managing Director announced the first three of a series of initiatives that the ABC intended to pursue.

In 2008–09, the Corporation continued to implement initiatives arising from the Production Review, including: the formation of a new division, ABC Resources, from the previous Production Resources and Resource Hire areas; a transfer pricing system to allow transparent assessment of the costs of internal production; the nationwide replacement of ageing television news studio technology with a more efficient, automated studio system; desktop editing of television news stories by journalists and the centralisation of graphics production for television news programs.



The implementation of the Production Review program is overseen by a Steering Committee chaired by the Managing Director and comprising representatives of relevant divisions. Work on the initiatives by divisional project teams is coordinated by Corporate Strategy and Marketing.

### Risk Management

The ABC's Business Continuity program operates within the Corporation's broader governance and risk management framework to enhance emergency coordination, crisis management and business continuity planning and processes. During 2008–09, business-specific recovery and continuity plans and processes were developed across all ABC metropolitan sites and key broadcasting operations were targeted to ensure consistent readiness, response and recovery activities in the event of a major business interruption. As a result, the Corporation is confident of its capacity to manage potential impacts on its outputs and the key resources that support them, including its people, facilities and critical technical infrastructure.

The ABC also continued to implement recommendations from an external risk management benchmarking review. Key milestones included the revision of the ABC's corporate risk profile and identification of top risks. Additionally, work began on divisional risk profiles to enable all ABC divisions to identify the risks and opportunities associated with achieving their objectives and the processes and systems they have implemented in response, as well as to assess the effectiveness of established processes and systems. The Comcover 2009 risk management benchmarking survey of 126 government agencies rated the Corporation's risk management practices as "advanced," with a benchmarking score representing marked improvement on the 2008 survey.

The ABC's 2008–09 workers' compensation premium rate was reduced from 0.77% of the Corporation's 2008–09 payroll to 0.63%. This represents a significant return to the Corporation. It reflects a reduction in ABC claim costs, attributed to decreased numbers of workers' compensation claims and effective injury management and return-to-work strategies for injured workers.

For 2009–10, the workers' compensation premium rate is 0.59% of the 2009–10 ABC payroll. This represents a 44% decrease in workers' compensation premium costs.

### Compliance Reporting

In June 2008, the Department of Finance and Deregulation issued Finance Circular No. 2008/5 relating to the *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act (CAC Act)* bodies in the general government sector. The Circular requires the ABC Board to report on compliance with the *CAC Act*, *CAC Orders 2008* and *CAC Regulations 1997* and the Corporation's financial sustainability to the Minister of Finance and Deregulation and the ABC's responsible Minister by 15 October each year.

To meet these requirements, the ABC has established an internal compliance reporting framework.

The Board signed and submitted the Compliance Report relating to the 2007–08 reporting period before the due date in October 2008.

### Internal Audit

Group Audit provides an independent and objective audit, review and advisory service to:

- provide assurance to the Board that the Corporation's financial and operational controls, designed to manage the organisation's risks and support the achievement of the Corporation's objectives, are operating in an efficient and effective manner; and
- assist management in improving the Corporation's business performance.

In 2008–09, Group Audit completed scheduled audits which included comprehensive, compliance, information technology, project assurance and follow-up audits. Group Audit also performed unscheduled reviews at the specific request of management and continued to use technology to undertake continuous auditing and monitoring of transactional data. As in previous years, Group Audit used a combination of in-house staff and external companies to provide the most appropriate expertise and industry experience. Group Audit also provided advice and guidance to ABC management and staff on good governance,

policies, risk management and controls, as well as advice on a number of projects and initiatives of the Corporation.

Further information is provided in Appendix 5, Audit and Risk Committee (page 192).

### Fraud Control

In 2008–09, the ABC continued to implement its Fraud Control Plan 2008–10 to ensure the Corporation meets the requirements of the Commonwealth Fraud Control Guidelines.

The Managing Director is satisfied that the ABC has in place appropriate procedures and processes relating to fraud prevention, detection, investigation, reporting and data collection, and that these comply with the Commonwealth Fraud Control Guidelines.

### Annual Report Awards

The *ABC Annual Report 2007–08* received a gold award in the Australasian Reporting Awards for the quality of its content and presentation. This was the sixth successive ABC Annual Report to win gold.

### Election Coverage Review Committee

When an election is called in any Australian jurisdiction, the ABC convenes an Election Coverage Review Committee (ECRC) to administer the free-time election broadcasts system under which the ABC broadcasts announcements by eligible political parties and to monitor coverage to ensure adherence to standards.

The ECRC is chaired by the Director of Editorial Policies.

The Committee monitors the amount of coverage across ABC platforms given to candidates and party officials (share-of-voice data). The data is used as a management tool to assist in ensuring that coverage meets requirements. Share-of-voice data is not, and is not intended to be, a definitive measure of impartiality.

In 2008–09, elections were held in the Northern Territory in August 2008, Western Australia in September 2008, the Australian Capital Territory in October 2008 and Queensland in March 2009.

## Summary of Contacts Received

Contact type	Email/Letter		Phone		Total
	Number	%	Number	%	
Complaint	19 750	35.2	12 380	8.8	32 130
Appreciation	4 629	8.2	6 304	4.5	10 933
Other*	31 794	56.6	121 778	86.7	153 572
Total	56 173	100.0	140 462	100.0	196 635

\* "Other" includes suggestions, requests for information, scheduling and transmission enquiries and general comments.

## Subject Matter of Contacts Received

Subject	Email/Letter	Phone	Total	% Total
Requests for information, programs, product availability and other matters	29 259	108 285	137 544	69.9
Complaints about program standards and scheduling	15 344	8 995	24 339	12.4
Radio and television transmission enquiries and complaints	3 164	15 353	18 517	9.4
Appreciation of programs and presenters	4 629	6 304	10 933	5.6
Complaints of factual inaccuracy	1 492	246	1 738	0.9
Party political bias	698	935	1 633	0.8
Bias (other than party political)*	1 320	243	1 563	0.8
Lack of balance	267	101	368	0.2
Total	56 173	140 462	196 635	100.0

\* Includes claims of bias in relation to issues such as sport and religion.

## Audience Contacts

Another important avenue for assessing the ABC's performance with its core constituency is through audience feedback, including complaints.

Complaints about issues such as factual inaccuracy, lack of balance, bias or inappropriate content are referred to the ABC Audience and Consumer Affairs unit. Audience and Consumer Affairs is independent of ABC program areas and investigates all written complaints referring to possible breaches of the ABC's *Editorial Policies*, *Code of Practice* or legislative Charter. The unit also coordinates responses to a range of programming and policy enquiries.

In 2008–09, the ABC logged 196 635 audience contacts—a 3% increase on the previous year. This total included 56 173 letters and emails (a 4% decrease on the previous year) and 140 462 calls to switchboards in State and Territory capitals and particular ABC programs and services (a 6% increase).<sup>42</sup>

Key concerns reflected in the audience contacts this year included 4 995 written and phone complaints about *The Chaser's War On Everything*. Of these, 4 286 were in relation to an item known as the "Make a Realistic Wish Foundation" sketch, which the ABC acknowledged had caused significant distress and offence to many people in the community. The sketch was found to have been in breach of the ABC's *Editorial Policies* and the ABC withdrew it from the repeats of the episode in which it occurred on ABC2 and from ABC online sites. Members of *The Chaser* team apologised. The Corporation suspended the program for two weeks and made changes to management responsibilities in ABC Television.

Changes to the ABC Radio National broadcast schedule entailing the cessation of various programs, including the *Religion Report*, generated 1 379 complaints.

Of the 32 130 complaints received, 3 196 were claims of party political or other bias, 368 alleged lack of balance and 1 738 were claims of factual inaccuracy. These complaints related to a broad range of ABC programs and services.

## Timeliness

As outlined in the ABC *Editorial Policies*, the ABC endeavours to respond to all audience contacts within 28 days. Between 1 July 2008 and 30 June 2009, ABC Audience and Consumer Affairs responded directly to 19 396 audience contacts. Of these, 16 337 (84%) received responses within 28 days.

During 2008–09, 17 646 written complaints were finalised by Audience and Consumer Affairs. The unit provided a personal response to 10 197 of these complaints (comprising 12 479 issues), of which 8 190 (80%) received responses within 28 days. 4 528 complaint contacts were referred to other areas of the Corporation for direct response, 50 complaint contacts were handled by the Complaints Review Executive and no substantive response was required for 2 871 complaint contacts.

## Upheld complaints

Audience and Consumer Affairs plays two distinct roles in responding to audience complaints. Where a written complaint suggests that the ABC may have breached its *Editorial Policies* or *Code of Practice*, the unit investigates the complaint and determines whether ABC editorial standards have been maintained. In cases where this has not occurred, the complaint will be upheld (either fully or in part). At the same time, Audience and Consumer Affairs provides an audience liaison service for complaints about matters of personal taste and preference, such as scheduling matters or preferences for different presenters. While Audience and Consumer Affairs responds to these complaints, they are not capable of being upheld.

The 10 197 responses to complaints sent by Audience and Consumer Affairs this year includes both categories of complaint. During 2008–09, 8 851 complaint issues were investigated of which 4 654 (53%) were upheld. Of these upheld complaint issues, 4 004 were in relation to *The Chaser's War On Everything* "Make a Realistic Wish Foundation" sketch. In the reporting period, 2 002 complaints about this segment were each upheld on two counts. Excluding these complaints, 4 847 issues were investigated, of which 650 (13%) were upheld.

<sup>42</sup> Combined audience contacts received by Audience and Consumer Affairs, News and the Reception Advice Line (phone, letter and email).



All upheld complaints are brought to the attention of the senior editorial staff responsible. In 2008–09, actions taken in response to upheld complaints included written apologies to complainants; on-air corrections and apologies; counselling or reprimanding of staff; removal of inappropriate content or correction of material on ABC Online; and reviews of and improvements to procedures.

In 2008–09, the ABC improved the transparency and accountability of its complaints process by publishing summaries of upheld complaints and reviews conducted by the Complaints Review Executive as individual complaints are finalised. Previously, the Corporation had released this data on a quarterly basis in the form of a *Public Report on Audience Comments and Complaints*. The new approach provides members of the public with more timely access to complaint decisions. The ABC continues to publish a quarterly statistical overview of audience contacts on its web site.

### Independent Complaints Review Panel

For persons not satisfied with the ABC's response to a written complaint, the ABC Board has established an Independent Complaints Review Panel (ICRP) to undertake independent review of complaints at no cost to the complainant. The ICRP can review complaints that raise allegations of serious cases of factual inaccuracy, bias, lack of balance or unfair treatment. Its members are all external to the ABC. Two of the three members were nominated by independent bodies external to the ABC (the Communications Law Centre and the St James Ethics Centre). The Convenor is nominated separately by the ABC Board. During the year, the term of one panellist, Ms Jane Singleton, expired. The Panel currently comprises the Convenor, the Hon Michael Foster QC and panellist, Ms Susan Brooks.

In the period 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009, the Panel received 17 requests to review complaints, of which nine were accepted for review. Five requests not accepted for review either did not, in the Panel's judgement, allege a sufficiently serious case of factual inaccuracy, bias, lack of balance or unfair treatment to merit review, or involved matters outside of the ICRP's area of responsibility. As the reporting year ended, the Panel were

actively considering three complaints and had not yet decided whether to accept these matters for review.

Eight cases finalised by the Panel were published on the ABC's website during the reporting year, two of which were upheld and six of which were not upheld (see Appendix 17, page 208). A further two reviews had been completed by the Panel but had not yet been published on the ABC's website, pending confirmation from the complainants that they had received the Panel's report. These matters will be detailed in next year's annual report.

At the end of the reporting year, three reviews were in process.

### Australian Communications and Media Authority

Members of the public who complain to the ABC about matters covered by the ABC *Code of Practice* and who are dissatisfied with the ABC's response or the outcome of an ICRP review may seek review from the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA).

During 2008–09, ACMA advised the ABC that it had finalised investigations into 14 such matters (the same number as in 2007–08). In each of these cases, ACMA found no breach of the ABC *Code of Practice*.

### Commonwealth Ombudsman

The Ombudsman's office did not commence or finalise any investigations in relation to the ABC during the current reporting period.

### Complaints Review Executive

The Complaints Review Executive (CRE) provides an additional level of internal review for complainants who express dissatisfaction with Audience and Consumer Affairs' response to their complaint. This does not preclude the complainant seeking external review via the Independent Complaints Review Panel or the Australian Communications and Media Authority.

Independent of both Audience and Consumer Affairs and all program units, the CRE has broad scope to review the content and the manner in which the complaint was originally handled, and to determine whether the ABC acted appropriately. All CRE determinations are reported to the ABC Board.

During 2008–09, 50 complaints were referred to the CRE, of which 49 were accepted for review. Two complaints were upheld. The CRE also adjudicated between ABC Audience and Consumer Affairs and ABC program units on six responses to complainants, leading to four upheld complaints. One was assessed as a request rather than a complaint and another was not upheld.

Summaries of CRE reviews are published on the ABC’s website.

### Transmission Failures

As the national broadcaster, the ABC is expected to provide uninterrupted radio and television services. To deliver these services, the ABC is dependent on Broadcast Australia to maintain the infrastructure and facilities at each transmission site. Power supply issues at some remote transmission sites affect the Corporation’s ability to deliver uninterrupted services. In 2008–09, the ABC and Broadcast Australia continued to develop initiatives to assess and improve reliability of mains power and emergency power plants in regional and remote areas.

As part of its emergency broadcasting role, the ABC owns portable FM “flyaway” transmitter units that can be deployed quickly to supplement ABC Local Radio coverage of natural disasters in regions that require specific emergency information and to ensure continuity of ABC Local Radio in the event of a major failure of existing transmission facilities. In 2008–09, the ABC acquired a third unit to service the southern states of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania. This complements existing flyaway transmitters in cyclone-prone areas in Queensland and Western Australia. Each unit is fully self-contained, with audio-mixing and transmission equipment. The ABC works closely with the various State and Territory emergency services authorities to ensure effective use of these transmitters.

In February 2009, flyaway units were deployed to Kinglake and Healesville following the Victorian bushfire disaster to enable hyper-local coverage and to supplement Melbourne Local Radio coverage. As a result of heavy flooding in February 2009, a unit was also deployed to Ingham, North Queensland, for a two-week period.

# Corporate Sustainability

The ABC is committed to fulfilling its obligations under the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation Act 1983* in a manner which is financially responsible and does not compromise the environment or the community.

## Sustainability snapshot

The ABC’s performance in the areas of economic, social and environmental responsibility are reported by a range of quantitative measures and qualitative assessments.

### Our environment

- Energy consumption (pages 65–7, 208)
- Green at Work initiatives (pages 65–7)
- Heritage protection (pages 128, 208)
- Launch of Catchment Detox (pages 27, 84, 97)

### Our community

- Emergency broadcasting (pages 34, 56, 74, 80, 106)
- Supporting regional youth (pages 26, 113, 134)
- International communities (pages 33, 59)
- Diversity of content and ideas, contributing to a sense of national identity (pages 8–9, 17, 87–8, 135)

### Our financial resources

- Financial performance (pages 76, 141)
- Building revenue (pages 102–3, 130–1)

### Our people

- Introduction of ABC Values (pages 24, 37, 60, 110)
- Resilience training (pages 62, 93)
- Succession planning (pages 61, 109–11)
- Protection of health and safety (pages 64, 110–1, 199)
- Scholarships and traineeships (pages 63, 109, 117)

## Corporate Social Responsibility

The ABC's performance in 2008 as a corporate citizen was assessed against the Corporate Responsibility Index (CRI). The CRI was developed and is maintained by the United Kingdom organisation, Business in the Community, and run in Australia through the St James Ethics Centre in Sydney.

The CRI assesses the extent to which corporate strategy is integrated into responsible business practice throughout an organisation and is a tool to evaluate management practices in key environmental and social impact areas. Performance is benchmarked against the organisation's own stated strategies and objectives as well as against other participating Australian and global organisations.

Participating organisations had their responses and documentation audited on site by PricewaterhouseCoopers. The ABC was one of 38 organisations from Australia and New Zealand participating in the CRI.

In 2008, the ABC received an index score of 89.63% (up from 61% in 2007). The ABC's achievement was recognised with the Best Progress award at the annual CRI Awards.

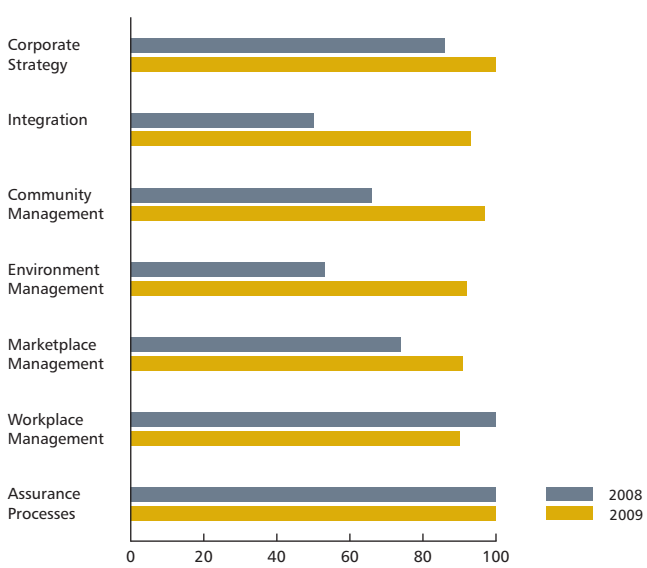
Overall the CRI demonstrated that the ABC has a well-developed approach to two-way consultation with a broad number of stakeholders in relation to its corporate responsibility activities. It was recognised that, as a result of the ABC's unique position in the Australian community, the Corporation has the opportunity for significant penetration of its activities to influence the broader community.

The ABC improved its results from 2007 in all areas other than workplace management. The decrease in the workplace management section from 100% in 2007 to 90% in 2008 can be partly attributed to changed index parameters in this area that led to a decrease in the Australian and New Zealand average score.

A number of opportunities for improvement were identified, including: working more closely with program content suppliers to improve energy efficiency and reduce emissions associated with production; continuing the implementation of the ABC Environmental Management System; and seeking independent ISO14001 certification over areas identified as higher risk.

The ABC is developing processes to improve its corporate social responsibility and will continue to use the CRI to benchmark improvements in performance.

Summary of the ABC's Overall Performance Across the CRI Key Impact Areas



Source: Corporate Responsibility Index Feedback Report 2008.

# Financial Summary

On 30 July 2009, the Audit and Risk Committee endorsed the signing of the 2008–09 Financial Statements and the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) issued an unqualified audit opinion.

## Financial Outcome 2008–09

As in previous years, the ABC operated within its total sources of funds and revenue from Government for the 2008–09 financial year.

## Sources of Funds 2008–09

The ABC was allocated \$869.7 million in the May 2008 Federal Budget.

The ABC also received \$225.6 million from other sources, including ABC Commercial.

The chart “ABC Source of Funds” depicts the ABC’s budgeted funds for the various categories against actual sources for 2008–09 and its budgeted sources for 2009–10.

## Application of Funds

The chart “Split Actual Expenditure 2008–09” broadly represents the ABC’s application of funds by function for the 2008–09 financial year.

## The Year Ahead

### Revenue from Government

In October 2008, the ABC submitted its *Triennial Funding Submission 2009–12* (the Submission) to the Australian Government. The Submission outlined proposals for: boosting Australian drama content on television; a new dedicated digital children’s television channel; a new digital public affairs television channel; enhanced international broadcasting; enhanced online delivery and additional content, including archival information for education; improved services for regional Australia; additional digital radio content; and ensuring the adequacy of the Corporation’s funding for operational and capital expenditures. The Submission was supplemented by the *ABC Cost and Performance Report 2008*.

The May 2009 Federal Budget maintained the ABC’s funding base and provided additional funding for a dedicated digital children’s television channel, more Australian television drama, establishment of regional broadband hubs throughout Australia, and funding for 2009–10 only to assist in the maintenance of the ABC’s asset base.

The ABC’s funding for the 2009–10 financial year is:

	\$m
Total revenue from Government per Outcomes 1, 2, 3 and 4, and including equity injection	929.9
Less Analog Transmission funds	–92.7
Less Digital Transmission funds	–84.2
Less Digital Radio Transmission funds	–4.4
Total Revenue from Government	748.6

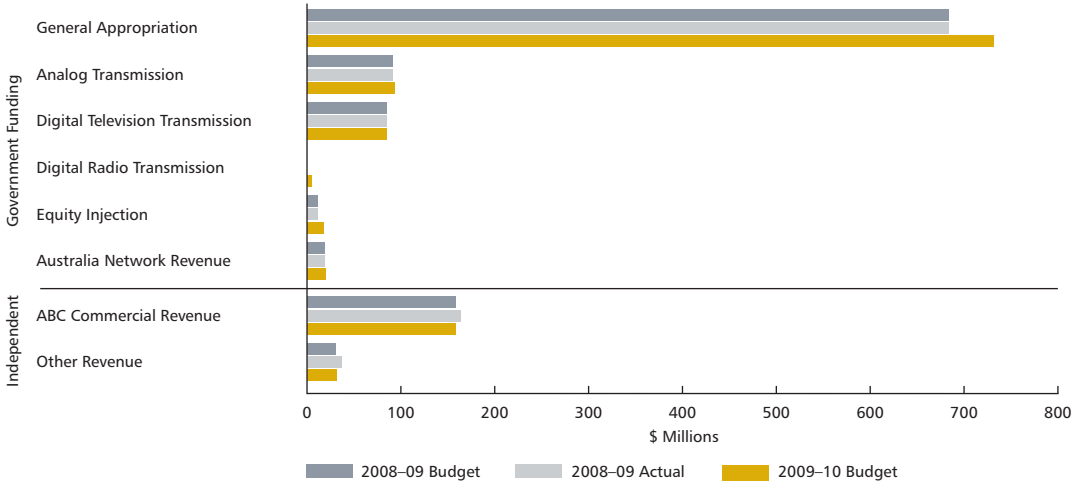
The chart “ABC Revenue from Government by Output 2009–10” broadly represents the ABC’s budgeted appropriation of funds by output for the 2009–10 financial year.

### Budget Strategy

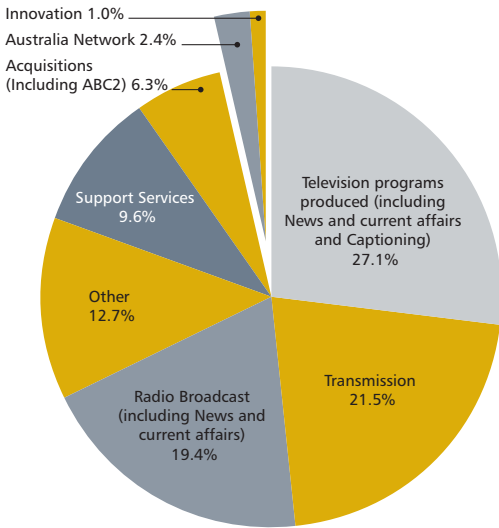
Although additional funding was announced in the Federal Budget, this funding is tied to specific initiatives and is not available to address the continual cost pressure arising from the ABC’s existing cost base. The Global Financial Crisis and its resulting impact on the ABC’s foreign currency purchases also brings additional pressure to tight financial conditions within the Corporation.



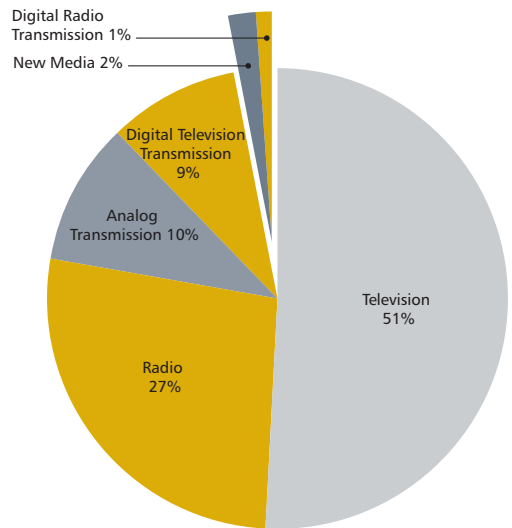
ABC Source of Funds



ABC Split Actual Expenditure 2008-09



ABC Revenue from Government by Output 2009-10



ABC Operational Revenue from Government

Including Capital Indexed at 2008-09 levels (December 2008 six months CPI Index) 26.1% reduction from 1985-86 to 2009-10



The 2009–10 Budget Strategy seeks to address this pressure and maintain ABC output activities and levels, so as to ensure ABC recurrent activities remain funded from recurrent sources. It also seeks to ensure resource allocations are consistent with the ABC’s strategic objectives and that a careful balance remains between funding vital future projects for the ABC, for example, a proposed dedicated 24-hour News service and ensuring existing content, facilities and operations are maintained at sustainable levels.

The Corporation is in the process of implementing recommendations of a review of its television production activities. This process has already delivered operational savings, which are being applied to sustainability as well as new strategic initiatives and is also expected to deliver further operational efficiencies over the next few years.

Funding to assist with the maintenance of the ABC’s asset base announced in the May 2009 Federal Budget, is for 2009–10 only. The Corporation will continue to liaise with Government in relation to its funding requirements for asset replacement, in the context of the findings of the second stage of the ABC’s Integrated Capital Strategy.

**Comparative Revenue from Government**

The 2009–10 operational revenue from Government of \$748.6 million represents a decrease in real funding of \$264.4 million or 26.1% since 1985–86 as depicted in the chart “ABC Operational Revenue from Government”.

Five-Year Analysis

	Recast 2005					
	2009	2008	2007	2006	(AEIFRS)*	2005
ABC Operating	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Cost of Services	1 088 535	1 041 391	976 459	929 236	891 298	926 161
Operating Revenue	244 002	219 641	185 206	187 015	166 430	201 712
Net Cost of Services (a)	844 533	821 750	791 253	742 221	724 868	724 449
Revenue from Government	858 411	833 963	809 532	774 254	757 532	757 532

	Recast 2005					
	2009	2008	2007	2006	(AEIFRS)*	2005
Financial Position	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Current Assets	275 761	276 332	244 513	248 309	209 682	209 683
Non-Current Assets	948 920	978 828	801 727	795 930	815 269	816 191
Total Assets	1 224 681	1 255 160	1 046 240	1 044 239	1 024 951	1 025 874
Current Liabilities	230 403	174 080	150 428	147 567	134 452	115 635
Non-Current Liabilities	48 187	114 002	136 059	154 518	174 095	194 712
Total Liabilities	278 590	288 082	286 487	302 085	308 547	310 347
Total Equity	946 091	967 078	759 753	742 154	716 404	715 527

**Ratios**

Current Ratio (b)	1.20	1.59	1.63	1.68	1.56	1.81
Equity (c)	77%	77%	73%	71%	70%	70%

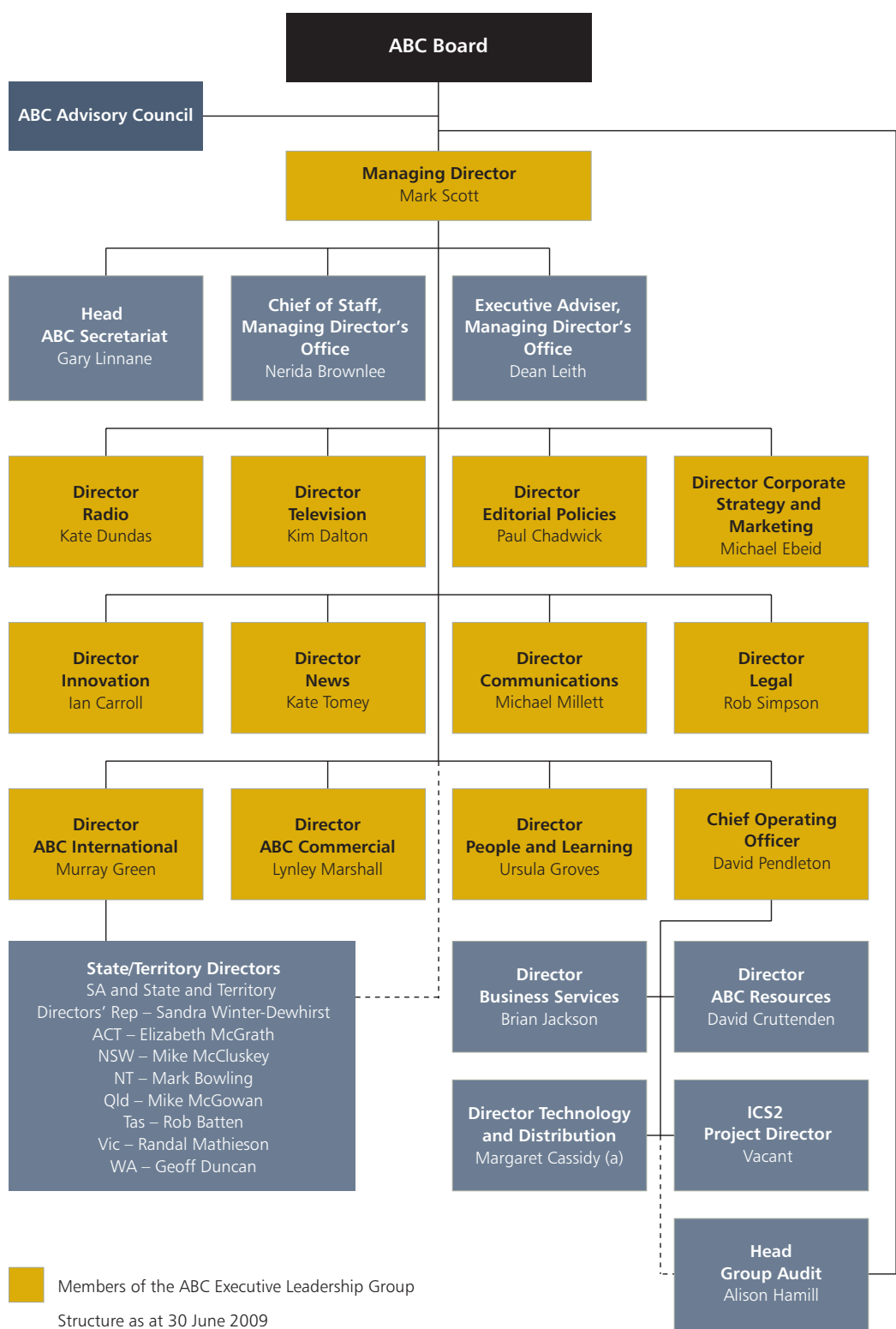
\* Australian Equivalents to International Financial Reporting Standards.

(a) Net cost of services is cost of services less operating revenue.

(b) Current assets divided by current liabilities.

(c) Equity as a percentage of total assets.

# ABC Divisional Structure



Members of the ABC Executive Leadership Group  
Structure as at 30 June 2009