

5<sup>th</sup> August 2011

Letter to the Editor, *The Australian*



Dear Editor

Re: **Inquiry into ABC needed**

Friends of the ABC shares *The Australian's* view that there should be an inquiry into the ABC. (*The Australian* editorial, August 4)

The ABC's announced cuts to TV programs and staff come on top of the broadcaster's closure of its acclaimed Natural History Unit in 2007 and it outsourcing to the commercial sector all local television drama and documentaries.

The ABC was envisaged as a producer of programs of cultural value and intellectual integrity.

Instead, Australia's public broadcaster is being transformed into a platform for programs that are made by the same companies that make programs for commercial television, and with an eye to commercial sales after first screening on the ABC.

Cutting edge content is disappearing, along with the ABC's independence and integrity. True diversity is being lost as program-makers who specialise in their area are axed and programming decisions shrink into the hands of a small number of managers. So is the secure base the ABC once provided to develop and nurture future local talent.

ABC managing director Mark Scott and the ABC Board are caretakers of this great national institution which belongs to the people of Australia. They have no authority to privatise it. An urgent public inquiry is needed to stop the ABC's commercialisation and rebuild its in-house production.

Yours sincerely

David Risstrom  
President  
Friends of the ABC (Vic)

GS: media folder