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MS25-001358

Dispatched to MO

1 JUL 2025



Australian Government

**Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts**

To: The Hon Anika Wells MP, Minister for Communications and Minister for Sport (for decision)

Subject: Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) Board: non-executive Director (NED) and Deputy Chair vacancies

Critical Date: Please action by 4 August 2025 to enable a Deputy Chair appointment ^{s47C}

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Key Points:

1. This submission seeks that you progress the current NED vacancy and upcoming Deputy Chair vacancy on the ABC Board. The current NED vacancy on the ABC Board arose on 23 December 2024, following the resignation of the Deputy Chair and NED Mr Peter Tonagh. The ABC Deputy Chair vacancy arises on 6 August 2025, when the 6-month term of Ms Georgina Somerset AM ends.

ABC NED vacancy

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ABC Deputy Chair vacancy

6.

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Under the ABC Act (s 12(3)), the Deputy Chair is appointed by the Governor-General from the ABC Board's NEDs. **Attachment C** outlines the NEDs eligible to serve as Deputy Chair

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8. The Deputy Chair appointment is held on a part-time basis for a period not exceeding 5 years (ABC Act, s 12(2)).

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Next steps

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Financial impacts: N/A

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Media Opportunities: N/A**Attachments:****Attachment A:** Nomination Panel report – ABC NED selection process**Attachment B:** ABC Board membership as at July 2025**Attachment C:** ABC NED information**Attachment D:** Australian Broadcasting Corporation (Non-executive Director – Selection Criteria) Determination 2024

Cleared By: Bridget Gannon
 Position: First Assistant Secretary
 Division: Media Policy
 Ph: 02 6136 s22(1)(a)(iii)
 Mob: s22(1)(a)(ii)
 Cleared Date: 17 July 2025

Contact Officer: Margaret Lopez
 Position: Assistant Secretary
 Branch: Broadcasting and Gambling
 Ph: 02 6136 s22(1)(a)(iii)
 Mob: s22(1)(a)(ii)

Instructions for Ministerial Services: Nil**Do you require a signed hardcopy to be returned:** No**Responsible Adviser:** s22(1)(a)(ii)

PDMS Distribution List: Jim Betts, James Chisholm, Bridget Gannon, Margaret Lopez, s22(1)(a)(ii), s22(1)(a)(ii), s22(1)(a)(ii), appointments@infrastructure.gov.au

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Additional Information:Appointments to the ABC Board

The Governor-General appoints the Deputy Chair and non-executive Directors to the ABC Board on your recommendation. In accordance with the Cabinet Handbook (subsection 115(a)), these are considered to be 'significant appointments'. As such, you must write to the Prime Minister seeking his approval, or at his discretion, the approval of Cabinet. A proposed appointment is then considered by the Federal Executive Council (ExCo).

The ABC Board must consist of the Managing Director, the Chair, the staff-elected Director and not fewer than 4 nor more than 6 other Directors (ABC Act, s 12).

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ABC NED – selection process summary

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Applications opened on 10 February 2025 and closed on 3 March 2025 following a national advertising campaign:

s47C, s47E(c)

s47C

The Panel's report includes applications and CVs for recommended candidates, referee reports and private interest declarations. Background checks were conducted for all shortlisted candidates

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NED selection criteria

The ABC Act (s 12(5)) and the [Australian Broadcasting Corporation \(Non-executive Director – Selection Criteria\) Determination 2024](#) (see **Attachment D**) outline matters you must consider when recommending an appointee to the Governor-General. The Panel's assessment is based on these requirements.

Subsection 12(5)(b) of the ABC Act outlines matters you must consider when appointing a NED, including that you must be satisfied that the person is suitable for appointment because of:

- experience in connection with the provision of broadcasting services or in communications or management; or
- expertise in financial or technical matters; or
- cultural or other interests relevant to the oversight of a public organisation engaged in the provision of broadcasting services.

Gender diversity target and Geographic representation

The Australian Government gender diversity targets are for women and men each holding at least 40 per cent of positions at the individual board level. The ABC Board currently has 33 per cent male (2 members) and 66 per cent female (4 members) representation. Three members are from New South Wales, and one member each from Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia.

The Managing Director and staff-elected Director are exempt from gender and geographical reporting as these are not government appointments.

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Nomination Panel

Section 24A of the ABC Act establishes the independent Panel, which is responsible for conducting merit-based selection processes for appointments to the ABC and SBS boards.

Subsection 24B(1)(d) of the ABC Act provides that the Panel must submit a written report to the Minister of the outcome of the selection process that contains a list of at least 3 candidates who are nominated for the appointment, and a comparative assessment of candidates. ^{s47C}

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The Hon Anika Wells MP
Minister for Communications
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister,

Report of the Independent Nomination Panel on the appointment of a Director of the Board of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

We are writing in response to a letter of 24 January 2025 from the then Minister, the Hon Michelle Rowland MP, requesting that the Independent Nomination Panel (the Panel) conduct a merit-based selection process for a non-executive Director vacancy on the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) Board in accordance with Part III A of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation Act 1983 (ABC Act).

Advertising

Advertising for the ABC Board Director position was in market from 10 February 2025 to 2 March 2025. Applications opened on 10 February 2025 and closed on 3 March 2025.

Advertisements appeared in the following publications:

National and Metropolitan newspapers:

The Australian Financial Review, The Weekend Australian, The Age, The Sydney Morning Herald and The West Australian.

Digital:

The Australian Financial Review, LinkedIn job board listing, digital display (programmatic), Women on Boards, SEEK and Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts website.

Social:

LinkedIn dark posts

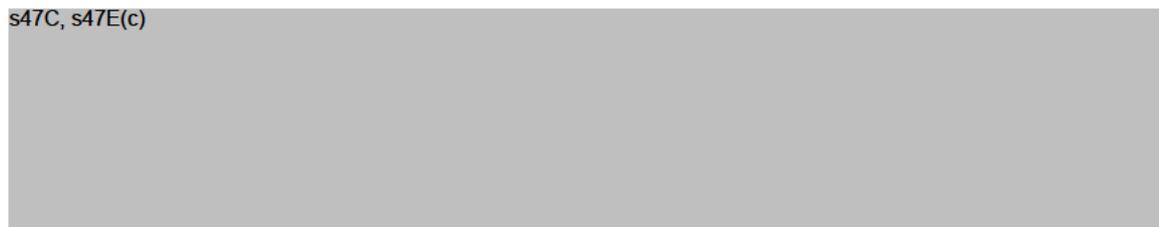
Search

To facilitate a strong field of candidates, the recruitment agency Challis and Company (Challis) was engaged by the Department to conduct a search to supplement the list of candidates that responded to the advertisement. Overall there were ^{s47} applications for the position. ^{s47C}

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Applications were received from:

s47C, s47E(c)



Assessment

In addition to the statutory criteria set out in the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation (Non-executive Director – Selection Criteria) Determination 2024* (the Determination 2024), the Panel assessed the applicants keeping in mind the Government's gender diversity target and geographic representation. On this occasion, and not counting the Managing Director and staff-elected Director who are not included in these calculations, the ABC Board has 33% male (2 members) and 66% female (4 members). On geographic make-up, the Board has 3 members from New South Wales and one each from Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia. s47C, s47E(c)

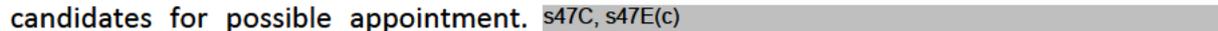


s47C



Recommended Candidates

Section 24B(1)(d) of the ABC Act requires the Panel to put forward a list of at least 3 candidates for possible appointment. s47C, s47E(c)



s47C



The recommended candidates who differ in their areas of experience and relative strengths are listed below in alphabetical order.

s47E(c), s47F



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s47E(c), s47F



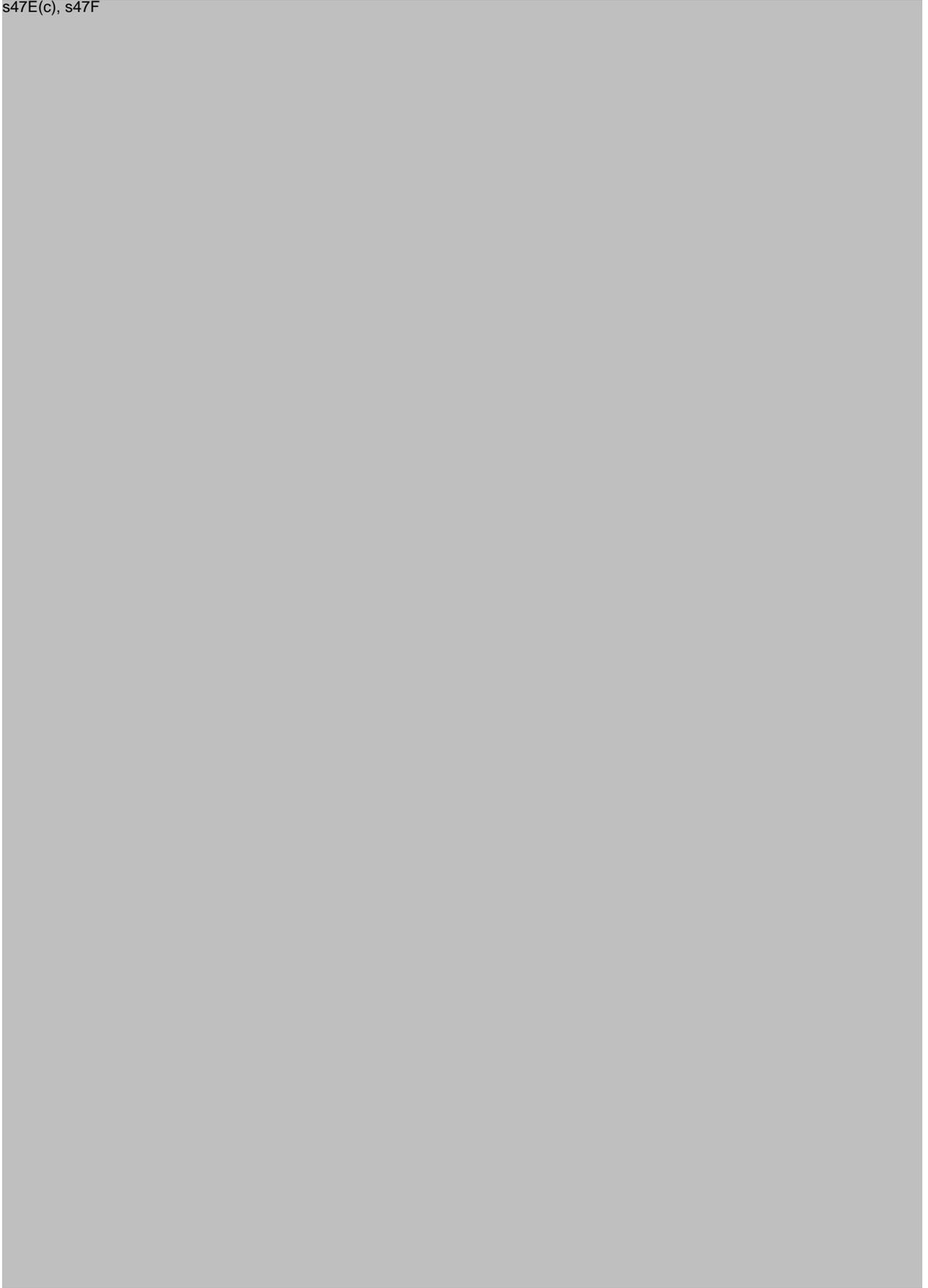
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s47E(c), s47F



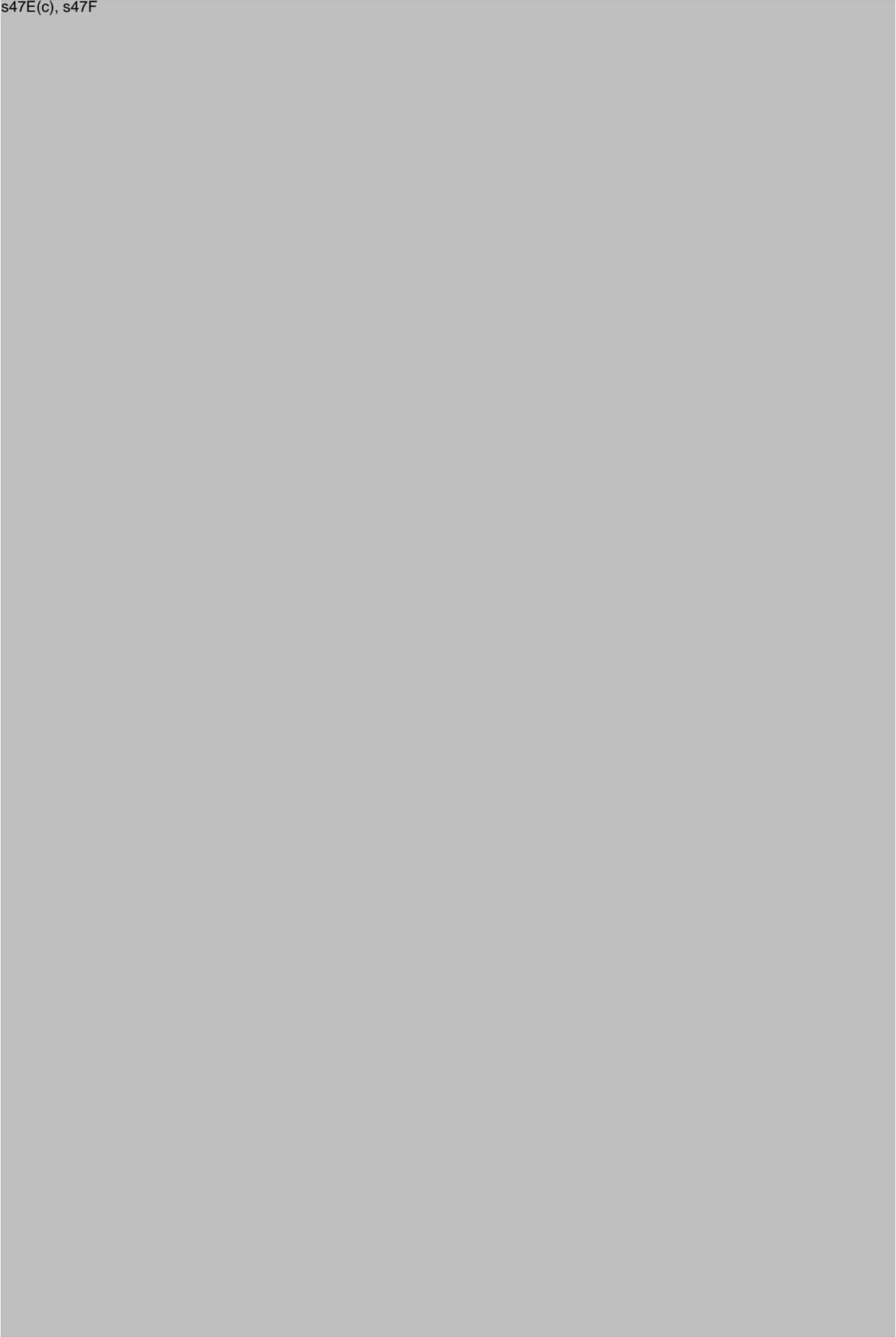
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s47E(c), s47F



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s47E(c), s47F



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s47E(c), s47F



Background Checks

Private Interest Declaration (PID) forms obtained from the nominated candidates are at [Attachment E](#).

Challis also arranged for background checks to be carried out that included Australian criminal history, Australian bankruptcy, directorships and business interests, entitlement to work and the veracity of educational and personal qualifications. The checks were carried out by Equifax Pty Ltd. None of the recommended candidates have adverse findings.

Conclusion

The process was assisted by the Department and by Challis, and the Panel appreciates their support.

The nominated candidates are put forward for your consideration and the Chair of the Panel is available to provide additional information if it would be of assistance.

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Yours sincerely,

s47F [Redacted]

s47F [Redacted]

Ms Helen Williams AC

Ms Catherine Liddle

Chair

Panel Member

04/07/2025

07/07/2025

s47F [Redacted]

s47F [Redacted]

Professor Derek Wilding

Ms Daryl Karp AM

Panel Member

Panel Member

04/07/2025

04/07/2025

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Confidential reference report



Australian Broadcasting Corporation ('ABC')



Non-executive Director ('NED') 2025



Note

This Confidential reference report:

- has been prepared by Challis & Company exclusively for the independent Nomination Panel and the Minister;
- contains personal information and is therefore subject to our Privacy policy (privacy.challis.co);
- in accordance with our Privacy policy, cannot be disclosed or used for any purpose unrelated to our Services;
- includes information reported by applicants or from public sources, which information is subject to verification;
- uses Challis & Company's proprietary assessment methodologies, and
- is the property of Challis & Company and the independent Nomination Panel must not distribute it.

DC/HJ

Challis & Company Pty Limited ABN 48 161 244 613 ('Challis & Company')



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Challis & Company acknowledges the traditional owners of the land (their ancestors and elders) on which our offices are located: the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation & the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation. We are committed to reconciliation through helping our clients identify Indigenous Australian non-executive directors and executives.



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350 Collins Street
Melbourne Vic 3000
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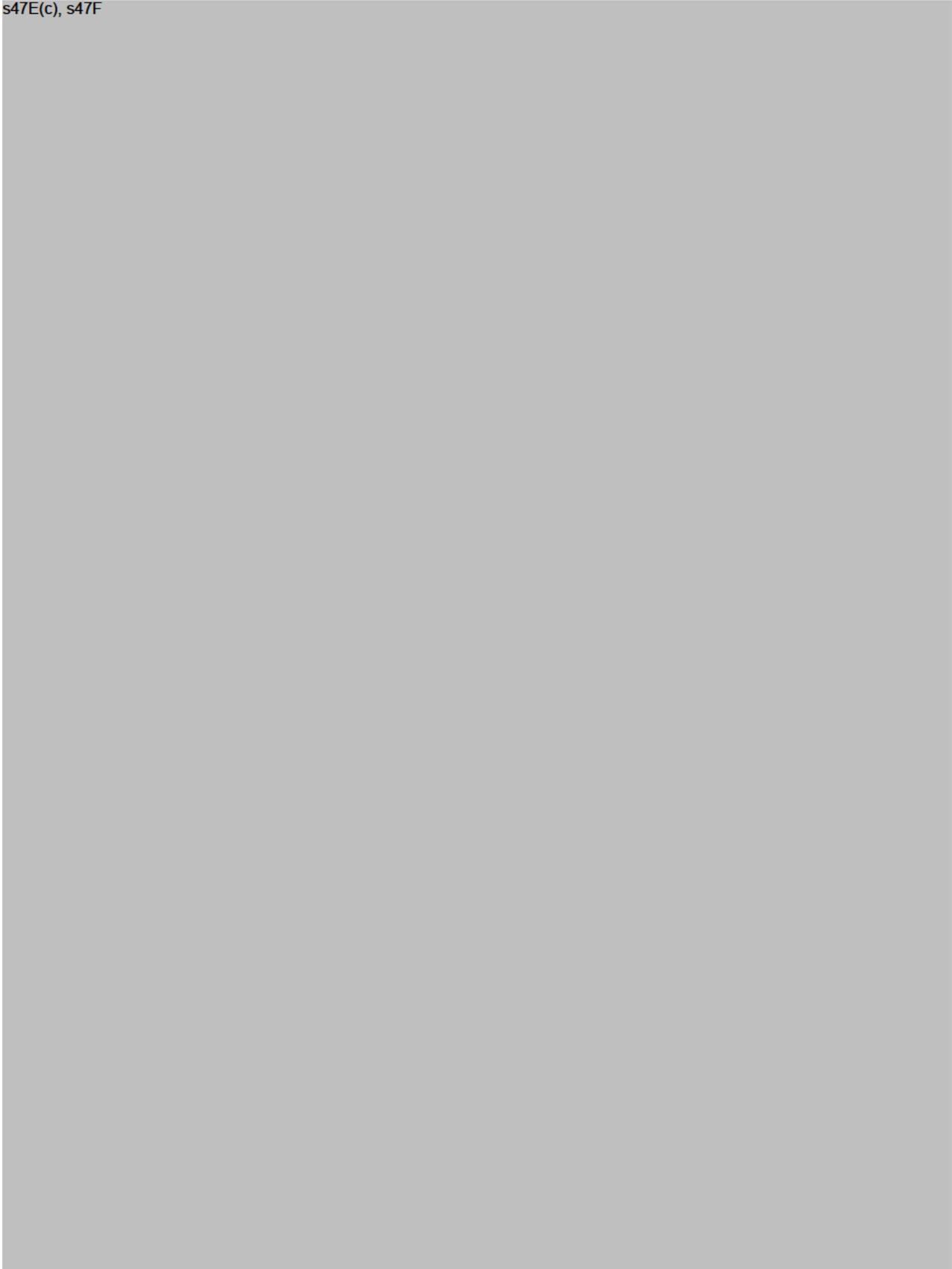
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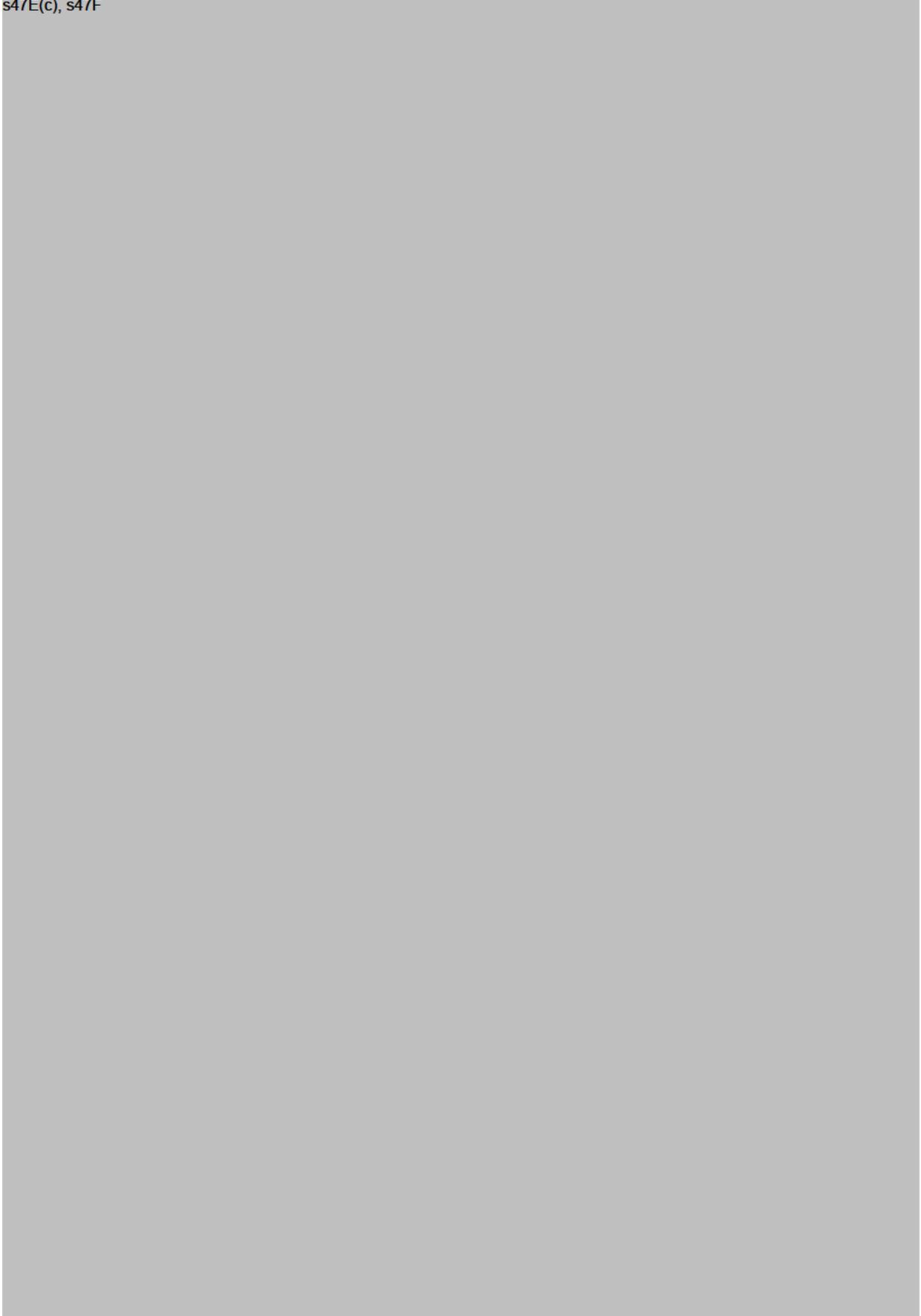
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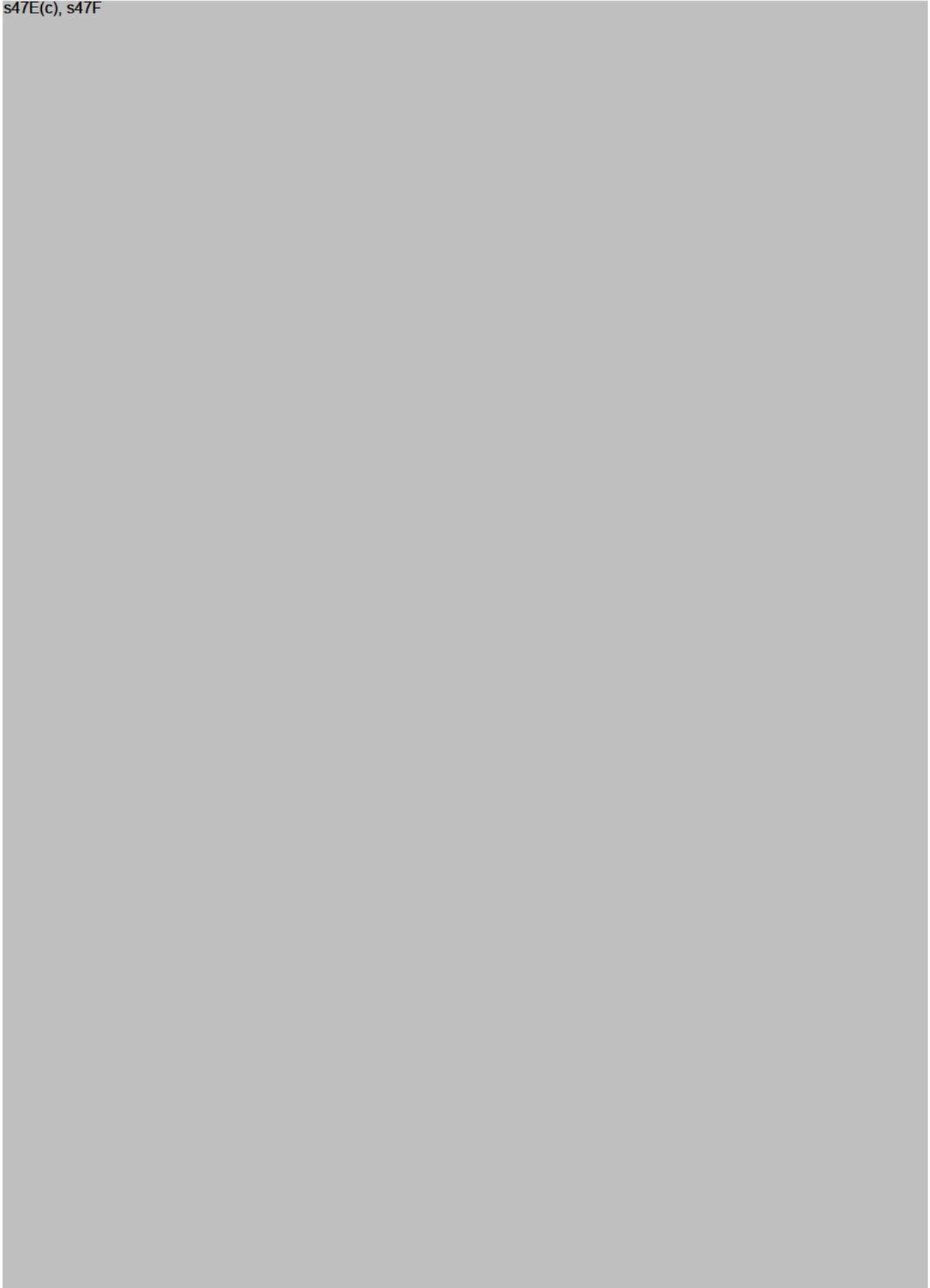
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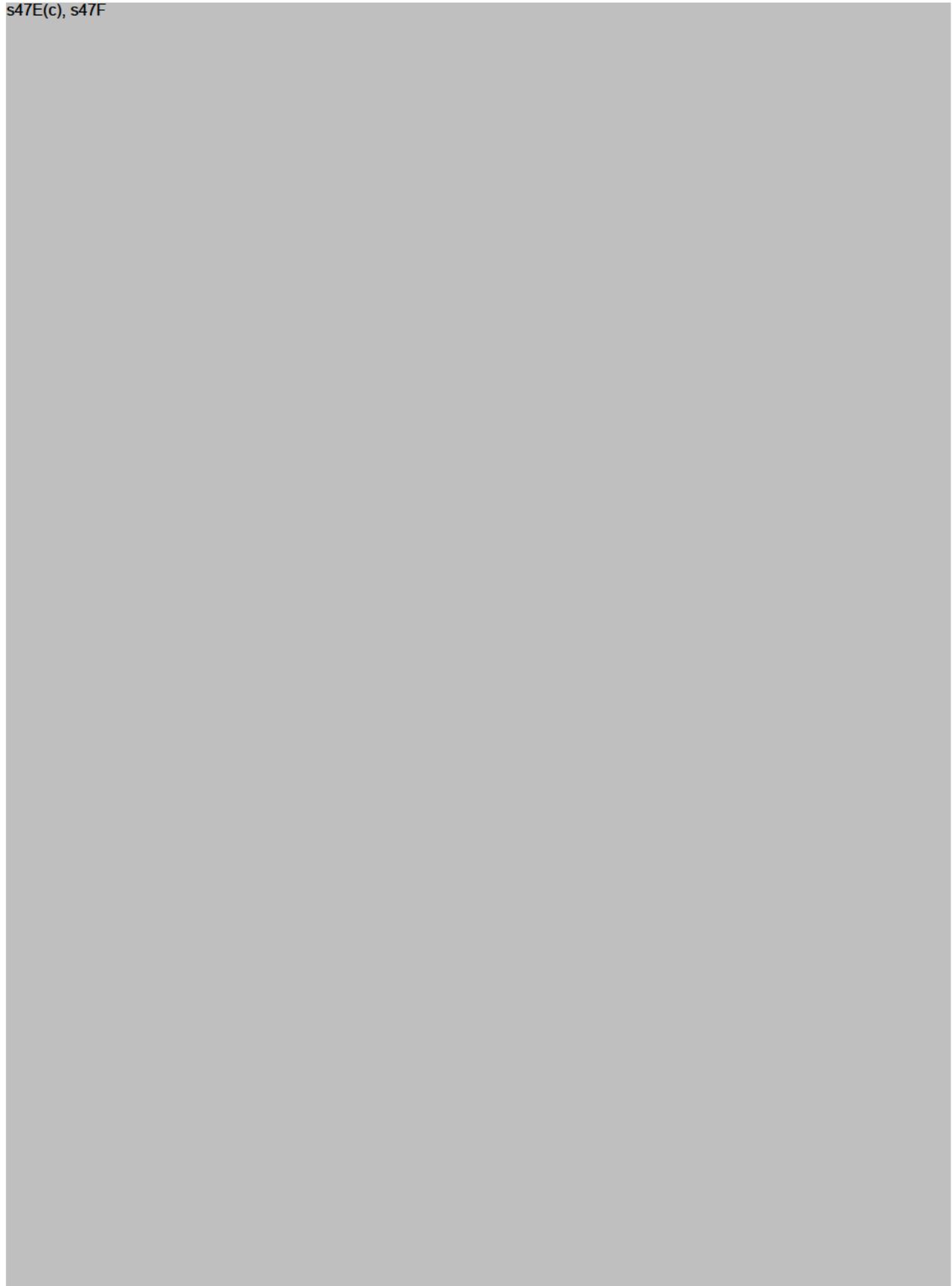
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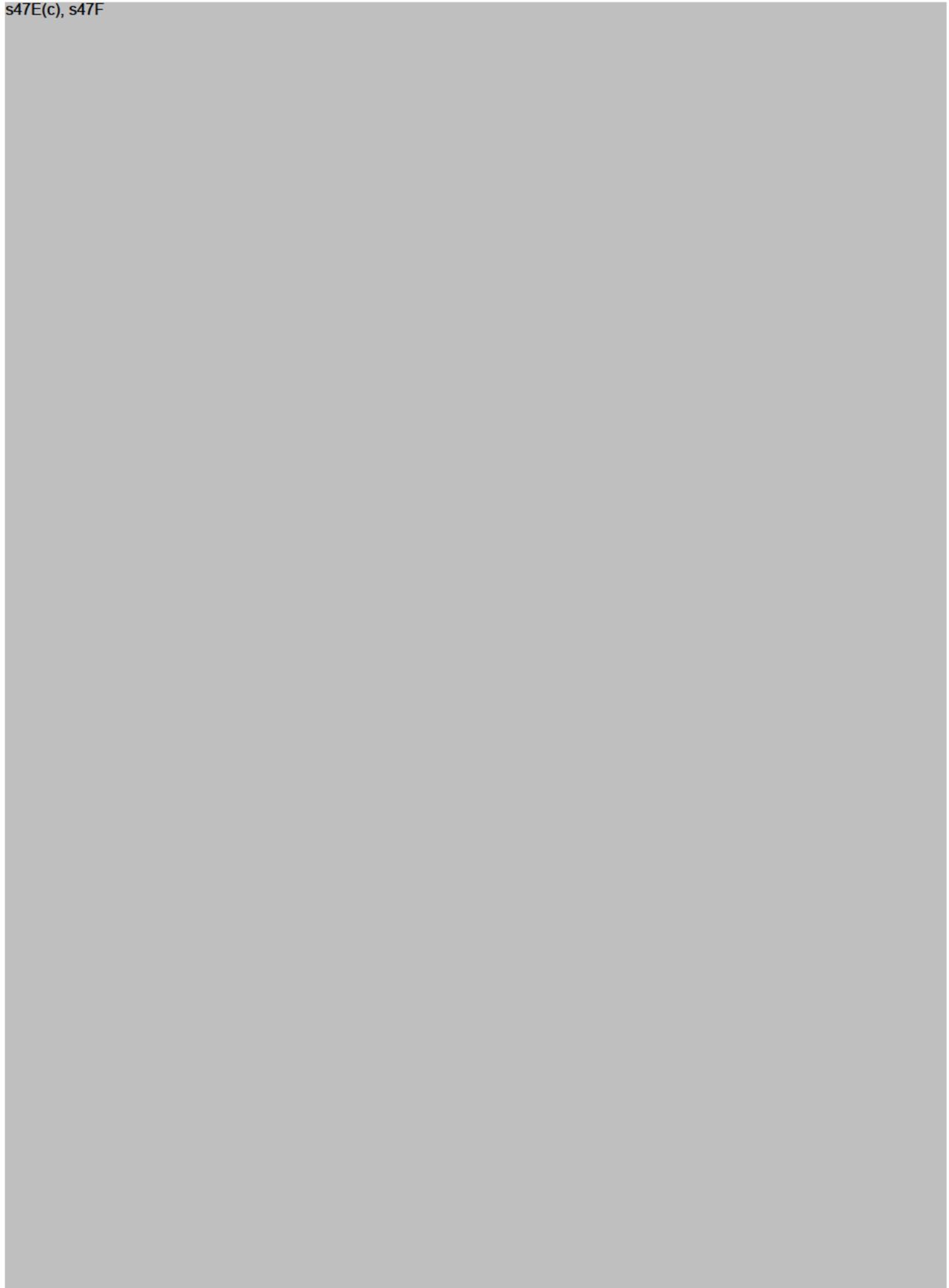
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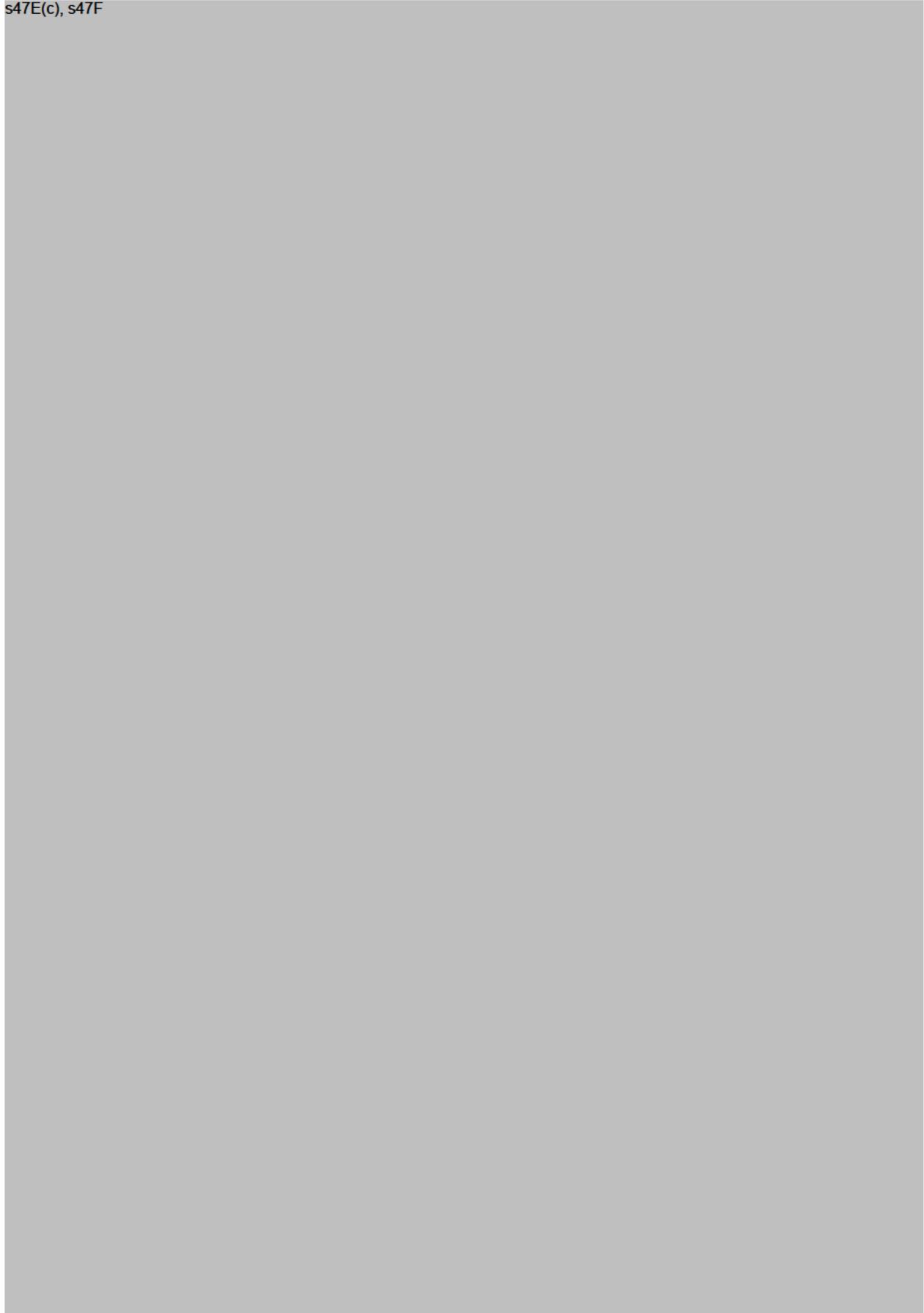
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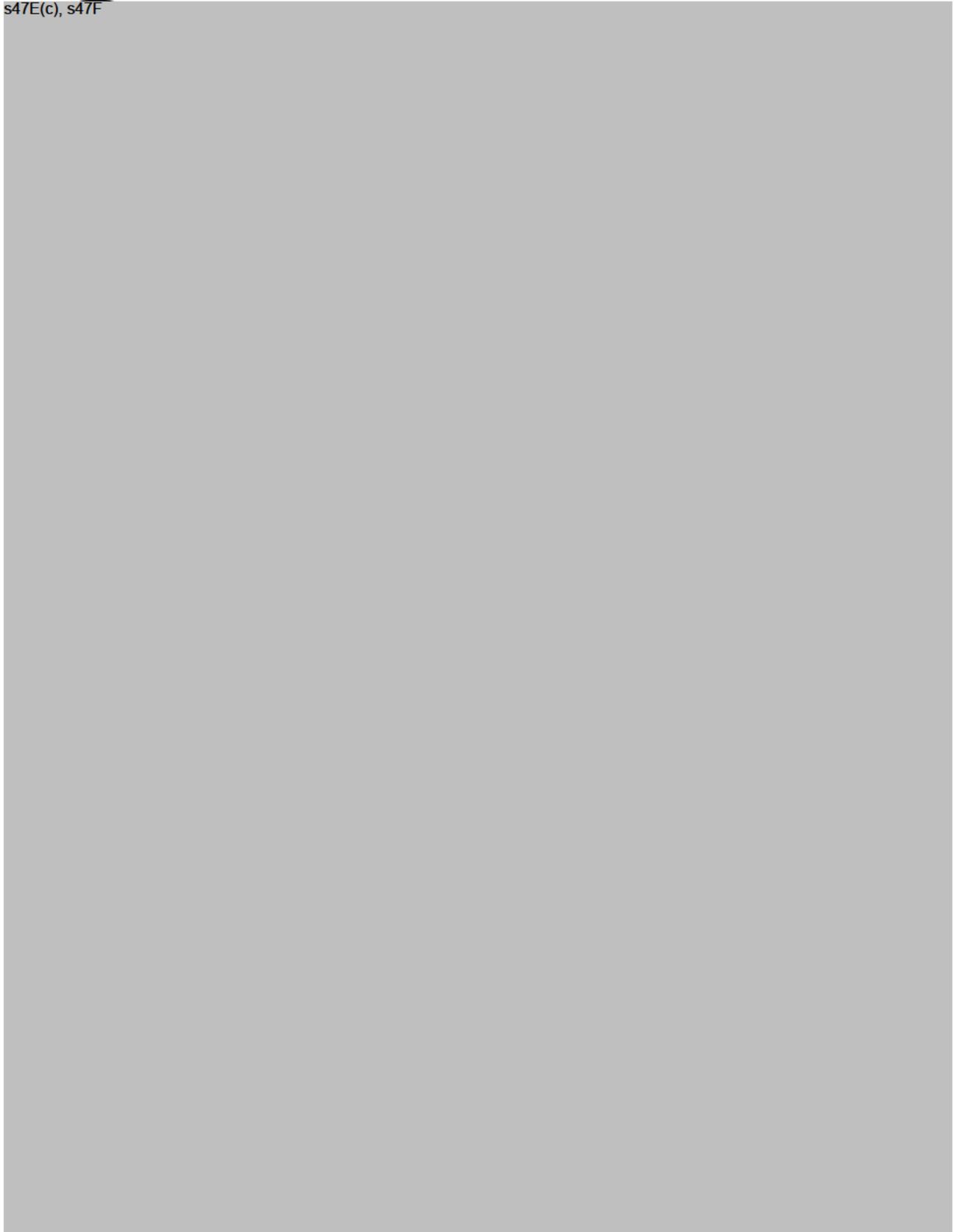
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AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION (ABC) Board membership as at 15 July 2025

<u>NAME</u>	<u>GENDER</u>	<u>POSITION</u> <i>(previous term/s in italics)</i>	<u>FT/PT</u> <i>(previous term/s in italics)</i>	<u>STATE OF RESIDENCE</u>	<u>DATE APPOINTED</u> <i>(previous term/s in italics)</i>	<u>EXPIRY DATE</u> <i>(previous term/s in italics)</i>
Mr Kimberley WILLIAMS AM	M	Chairperson	PT	NSW	07.03.24	06.03.29
Ms Georgina SOMERSET AM	F	Deputy Chairperson and Non-executive Director	PT	Qld	06.02.25 23.02.22 <i>23.02.17</i>	05.08.25 22.02.27 <i>22.02.22</i>
Mr Hugh Marks*	M	Managing Director	FT	NSW	10.03.25	09.03.30
Ms Laura TINGLE*	F	Staff elected Director / Non-executive Director	PT	NSW	01.05.23	30.04.28
Mr Mario D'ORAZIO	M	Non-executive Director	PT	WA	13.05.21	12.05.26
Ms Nicolette MAURY	F	Non-executive Director	PT	NSW	16.10.23	15.10.28
Ms Louise McELVOGUE	F	Non-executive Director	PT	NSW	16.10.23	15.10.28
Ms Katrina SEDGWICK	F	Non-executive Director	PT	Vic	02.10.24	01.10.29

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VACANT

Non-executive
Director

PT

Current Gender and Geographic composition		
Gender balance	Geographic balance	
Males: 2 (33%)	NSW:3	WA: 1
Females 4 (66%)	VIC: 1	QLD: 1
	SA: 0	TAS: 0
	NT: 0	ACT: 0
	Other (e.g overseas) 0	

Note: Individuals marked with an asterisk () are exempt from gender and geographical reporting as these are not government appointments.*

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Attachment B: AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION (ABC): DEPUTY CHAIR CANDIDATES as at 15 July 2025

ABC Non-Executive Director (NED)	Image	State of residence	ABC NED appointment term	ABC Board Committee role(s)	Select work history	Key skills (from Board skills matrix provided to the former Minister by the ABC Chair 26.03.2024)
<p>Ms Georgina Somerset AM</p> <p>LinkedIn ABC profile</p>		Qld	<p>23.02.17 – 22.02.27</p> <p><i>Deputy Chair:</i> 06.02.25 – 05.08.25</p>	Member, People and Culture Committee	<p>s47F</p>	<p>s47F</p>
<p>Mr Mario D’Orazio</p> <p>LinkedIn ABC profile</p>		WA	13.05.21 – 12.05.26	Chair, People and Culture Committee		
<p>Ms Nicolette Maury</p> <p>LinkedIn ABC profile</p>		NSW	16.10.23 – 15.10.28	Member, Audit and Risk Committee		
<p>Ms Louise McElvogue</p> <p>LinkedIn ABC profile</p>		NSW	16.10.23 – 15.10.28	Chair, Audit and Risk Committee		
<p>Ms Katrina Sedgwick OAM</p> <p>LinkedIn ABC profile</p>		Vic	02.10.24 – 01.10.29	Member, People and Culture Committee		

*Note ABC Board Members **Mr Hugh Marks** (Managing Director) and **Ms Laura Tingle** (Staff-elected Director and NED) are not eligible for appointment as Deputy Chair.

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Australian Broadcasting Corporation (Non-executive Director—Selection Criteria) Determination 2024

I, Michelle Rowland, Minister for Communications, make the following determination.

Dated 12 September 2024

Michelle Rowland
Minister for Communications

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1 Name

This instrument is the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation (Non-executive Director—Selection Criteria) Determination 2024*.

2 Commencement

This instrument commences on the day after the instrument is registered.

3 Authority

This instrument is made under subsection 24W(1) of the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation Act 1983*.

4 Definitions

Note: A number of expressions used in this instrument are defined in section 3 of the Act, including the following:

- (a) Director
- (b) non-executive Director.

In this instrument:

ABC means the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

Act means the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation Act 1983*.

Charter means the functions of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation specified in section 6 of the Act.

5 Schedules

Each instrument that is specified in a Schedule to this instrument is amended or repealed as set out in the applicable items in the Schedule concerned, and any other item in a Schedule to this instrument has effect according to its terms.

6 Selection criteria for certain kinds of non-executive Directors

Note: The position referred to in paragraph 12(1)(b) of the Act is the position of Chair. The position referred to in paragraph 12(1)(c) of Act is the position of Director (but does not include the staff-elected Director or Managing Director).

- (1) For subsection 24W(1) of the Act, the following selection criteria is determined for the appointment of a Director of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation Board referred to in paragraph 12(1)(b) or (c) of the Act:
 - a. the person must demonstrate substantial experience or knowledge in at least one of the following fields:
 - i. the media industry;
 - ii. broadcasting and digital media;

-
- iii. digital technologies in any sector other than the media sector;
 - iv. business or financial management;
 - v. creative arts;
 - vi. educational content creation;
 - vii. corporate governance, including managing large and/or complex operations in the private, public or not-for-profit sectors;
 - viii. cultural industry and/or cultural policy, including its administration; and
- b. the person possesses all of the following attributes:
- i. demonstrated high-level leadership and vision, and the ability to articulate a clear direction for an organisation;
 - ii. financial literacy;
 - iii. high-level judgement;
 - iv. the highest standards of professional and personal integrity;
 - v. an understanding of, or the ability to credibly represent, the communication needs of Australia's diverse society; and
 - vi. an understanding of the media environment, in particular the ABC, the Charter and its place within the Australian community; and
- c. the person demonstrates a commitment to high standards of governance.

Schedule 1—Repeals

Australian Broadcasting Corporation (Selection criteria for the appointment of non-executive Directors) Determination 2013

1 The whole of the instrument

Repeal the instrument