

From: Bromley McLean <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, 21 June 2018 6:23 PM
To: Competitive Neutrality Inquiry
Subject: Inquiry into the competitive neutrality of the national broadcasters

Hello,
I would like to make the following submission to this inquiry.

A note on the ABC and SBS re Competitive Neutrality.

1. The ABC and SBS operate under “charters” that were set in law by the federal Government. In addition they operate under the Public Governance , Performance and Accountability Act 2013 [PGPA].

These charters and the PGPA set out the over-arching goals, ground rules , standards and values that each public organisation must adhere to, and sets the standards of governance, performance and accountability .

In contrast any commercial broadcaster in Australia is not subject to any legally binding or guiding charter, nor the same standards of governance, performance and accountability. Thus, one could argue, that the ABC and SBS operating under government charter and the PGPA is a major competitive disadvantage in their quest for audience/market share etc.

2. On the question of “efficiency” which is what this inquiry is all about.

Many markets are distorted when consumers do not have “perfect knowledge”.

In a world where many products and services are increasingly complex , the provision of free to air or on-line knowledge for consumers gives greater market power through better informed consumers. The role of the ABC and SBS as independent media providers is vital, in this area. This come through the quality of programs like Gruen, Check-out on ABC and investigative journalism on commercial issues. This type of broadcasting does not happen, very often or not at all, in the commercial media especially where a conflict of interest may preclude the exposure of an advertising client.

3. On the “efficiency” of our political system. Ralph Nader holds the view that good information makes for better consumers and better voters.

The ABC has a proud track record of exposing political corruption in Australia, through its investigative journalism. Again no commercial broadcaster has the same track record. For this alone, the independence of the ABC and the SBS are vital to our democracy.

Many Thanks,

Hylton McLean

