

**Surveys initiated by the RTHK Board of Advisors
The way forward**

Supplementary Paper

**Survey conducted by
Australian Broadcasting Corporation**

Purpose

BOA Paper 13/2011 sets out the surveys conducted by British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) Trust, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) and RTHK for Members' deliberation on the way forward for the Board to conduct surveys on RTHK as a public service broadcaster (PSB). This paper is a supplement to the said paper introducing the survey conducted by another PSB, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC).

The Annual ABC Appreciation Survey

2. The Annual ABC Appreciation Survey, which was first introduced in 1998 and 1999, is commissioned to a chosen survey house by the ABC. It has become an annual survey since 2002.

Objective

3. The objective of the research is to provide an overview of community attitudes about the ABC - as distinct from the detailed behavioural information provided by television, radio and online ratings. Specifically, the research explored community attitudes and perceptions about :

- a. the overall value of the ABC and its services to the Australian community;
- b. the quality of programming on ABC Television and Radio;
- c. the extent to which ABC Television and Radio offer programming people like to watch, or listen to;

- d. usage of, and attitudes towards the ABC website; the ABC's coverage of country news and information;
- e. the extent to which the ABC fulfils various other charter obligations; and
- f. the even-handedness of ABC news and current affairs reporting.

4. As a point of comparison, and to assist interpretation of results, attitudes and perceptions were also measured in relation to commercial media on a number of dimensions. TV viewing and radio listening were also collected for cross-analysis purposes.

Methodology

5. The research was conducted nationally, by telephone, among 1,904 respondents aged 14 years and over. Fieldwork was conducted between June 3 and 26, 2011, by fully trained and personally briefed interviewers. Respondents were selected by a stratified random sample process which included :

- a. quota being set for each capital city and non-capital city area, and within each of these areas; and
- b. quota being set for groups of statistical divisions or subdivisions.

Results were post-weighted to ABC data on age, highest level of schooling completed, sex and area. Respondents are asked to adopt a 100 points scale, to evaluate the ABC performance in various fields.

Questions asked in the survey

6. Questions asked in the survey include –

a. Overall value of ABC

Thinking now about the ABC overall, including ABC Television, Radio and the ABC website. Overall, how would you rate the value of the ABC and its services to the Australian community? Would you say it is ...?

b. Television - Quality of programming

Based on your own experience, or what you may have seen or heard,

overall do you think the quality of programming on... (TYPE) is good or poor?

Based on your own experience, or what you may have seen or heard, overall do you think the quality of programming on ABC Television is good or poor?

Based on your own experience, or what you may have seen or heard, overall do you think the quality of programming on commercial television is good or poor?

c. Television - Number of shows you like to watch

And overall would you say ... (TYPE) does a good job, or a poor job, in terms of the number of shows it provides that you personally like to watch?

d. ABC Television - Number of shows you like to watch

And overall would you say ABC Television does a good job, or a poor job, in terms of the number of shows it provides that you personally like to watch?

e. Commercial TV - Number of shows you like to watch

And overall would you say commercial television does a good job, or a poor job, in terms of the number of shows it provides that you personally like to watch?

f. Radio - Quality of programming

Based on your own experience, or what you may have seen or heard, overall do you personally think the quality of programming on... (TYPE) is good or poor?

g. ABC Radio - Quality of programming

Based on your own experience, or what you may have seen or heard, overall do you personally think the quality of programming on ABC Radio stations is good or poor?

h. Commercial Radio - Quality of programming

Based on your own experience, or what you may have seen or heard,

overall do you personally think the quality of programming on commercial radio stations is good or poor?

i. Radio - Amount of programming like to listen to

And overall would you say that ... (TYPE) does a good job, or a poor job, in terms of the amount of programming it provides that you personally like to listen to?

j. ABC Radio - Amount of programming like to listen to

And overall would you say that ABC Radio does a good job, or a poor job, in terms of the amount of programming it provides that you personally like to listen to?

k. Commercial Radio - Amount of programming like to listen to

And overall would you say that Commercial Radio does a good job, or a poor job, in terms of the amount of programming it provides that you personally like to listen to?

l. Frequency use ABC website

Now thinking about the ABC website. About how often would you personally visit the ABC website? Would it be at least once a week, less than once a week or never?

m. ABC website - quality of content

Do you personally think the quality of the content on the ABC website is good or poor?

n. ABC website – amount of content

As far as the things you use the ABC website for, would you say the website does a good job, or a poor job, in terms of the amount of content it provides on those things?

o. Doing a good or poor job in country and regional areas

Thinking now of news and information about things happening in country and regional areas of Australia. In your opinion, do ABC / commercial TV & radio stations & websites do a good job, or a poor job of covering things happening in country and regional areas of Australia?

p. *Other specific charter obligations*

Now we'd like your opinion about other aspects of the ABC. Based on your own experience, or what you may have seen or heard, do you personally think the ABC is doing a good job or a poor job on each of the following?

- (i) encouraging and promoting Australian performing arts such as music and drama;*
- (ii) broadcasting programs of an educational nature;*
- (iii) being distinctively Australian and contributing to Australia's national identity;*
- (iv) being efficient and well managed broadcasting programs that are different from the sort of programs you would get on commercial television and commercial radio stations;*
- (v) having a good balance between broadcasting programs of wide appeal, and broadcasting programs that appeal to people with special interest; and*
- (iv) broadcasting programs that reflect the cultural diversity of the Australian community.*

Major findings in 2011 survey

7. The major findings of the survey include -
 - a. Overall value of the ABC;
 - b. Nine-in-ten Australians believe the ABC performs a valuable role, and a large majority believe it provides quality content, and that it is doing a good job satisfying its charter obligations;
 - c. The most marked change has been a further measurable increase in positive community sentiment about the quality and quantity of appealing content provided by *commercial* TV. Perhaps related to this, there has also been a marked increase in positive sentiment about commercial media's coverage of country news and information. Presumably all of this is connected with the introduction and growth of the free to air digital channels;
 - d. Overall, community attitudes concerning ABC TV remain largely positive and unchanged. More 18 to 24 year olds have a positive view

about ABC TV providing shows they personally “*like to watch*”, following a gradual negative trend in perceptions among this group since 2008. On the other hand a similar negative trend among 25 to 34’s has not abated;

- e. The 2011 survey finds a small drop in the level of positive community sentiment about the quality and quantity of appealing content provided by ABC Radio - though this has *not* been a result of increased negative sentiment, but rather more people simply not having an opinion about ABC Radio;
- f. More Australians say they are using the ABC website, and there is a continued, gradual increase in the number of users who regard the quality and quantity of the site to be *very good*; and
- g. Compared with 12 months ago, there are a few areas concerning the ABC charter where more Australians feel the ABC is doing a *very good job* :

- (i) *being innovative – that is trying to do new things and different types of programs;*

- (ii) *broadcasting programs of an educational nature;*

- (iii) *having a good balance between programs of wide appeal and programs for those with special interests, and*

- (iv) *broadcasting programs that reflect cultural diversity.*

Radio Television Hong Kong
November 2011