



P.O. Box 167,  
Alstonville, 2477

7 June, 2004

Dear Candidate

Prior to each Federal election, the Northern Rivers branch of the Friends of the ABC invites candidates from each party to take part in a survey on ABC issues. I have enclosed our current survey for your perusal and hope that you can assist us in surveying the policies of major political parties that are presenting candidates in the Page and Richmond electorates.

You will notice that the survey questions are organized under themes. We ask you to present your party's policies on each of the issues listed and to answer a specific question on each issue. If you have time, a few sentences on each issue would be helpful. We also ask you to provide a personal view on the role of the ABC. We plan to publish the responses (in full) prior to the election on our branch web site at <http://home.iprimus.com.au/webformation/friendsabcnr>.

If you have any questions about the survey please contact me on 02 66 743830. I feel sure that you will agree that the national broadcaster plays a vital role in Australian society. We expect, however, that there will be differences in emphasis when each party puts forward its policy on the ABC and we hope to give electors in Page and Richmond a chance to examine these differences.

It would be helpful for us if you could reply to the survey by 12 July so we can collate the results. Thank you for your cooperation.

Neville Jennings  
(President, Northern Rivers Friends of the ABC)

**Northern Rivers Friends of the ABC  
Survey of Political Party Policies on the ABC**

Could you please outline your party's policy on each of the following issues, including a response to the particular questions listed under each heading. At the end of the survey there is an opportunity for you to outline your personal position on the ABC.

1. Funding for the ABC

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Will your party provide increased funding for the ABC so that it can fulfil its unique role as the national broadcaster?

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2. Appointments to the Board of the ABC

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Would your party introduce a change to the method of making appointments to the ABC Board to eliminate or reduce the incidence of political appointments?

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3. Freedom from political interference

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Will your party ensure that the ABC is protected from political interference so that its investigative journalists can fearlessly but fairly uncover information of public interest?

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4. Implications of the Free Trade Agreement with the USA

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Does your party feel that the proposed Free Trade Agreement with the USA will have any detrimental effect on public broadcasting or on Australian multi-media industries?

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5. Protection against calls for advertising on the ABC

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Will your party work to ensure that the ABC remains free of commercial advertising?

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6. Support for SBS as well as the ABC

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Will your party ensure that the Special Broadcasting Service fulfils its charter by educating Australians about cultures within our borders and overseas.

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7. Commitment to children's programs

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Will your party provide sufficient funds for the ABC to produce high quality children's programs and to restore programs such as Behind the News and Fly.

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8. Commitment to Australian drama

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Will your party provide the ABC with sufficient funds to remain a producer of high quality Australian drama?

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9. Commitment to Radio Australia

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Will your party provide sufficient funds for Radio Australia to provide a valuable service within the Asia Pacific region?

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10. Increased funds for digital technology

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Will your party ensure that the ABC has sufficient funds to introduce digital technology and new media?

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11. Support for regional stations and regional production

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Will your party maintain the National Interest program and recognise the important role that the ABC plays in regional Australia?

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