Since 2014:

**FACT #1**

ABC base funding has been cut by almost $340 million since 2014.

- **2014:** ABC five-year budget reduced from $5.47 billion to $5.22 billion. Initial cut of $35.5 million in May Budget; full amount of **$254 million** cut following Lewis Efficiency Review in November (amount does not include termination of Australia Network contract worth $197 million to the ABC).

- **2016:** Enhanced Newsgathering Program reduced from $60 million to $41.4 million over three years, a cut of **$18.6 million**.

- **2018:** Indexation of ABC operating revenue to be frozen for three years. Impact on base funding of **$83.7 million**.

**FACT #2**

ABC funding is 30% less what it was three decades ago.

In real terms, ABC operational revenue from government has fallen by **28%** between 1985-6 and 2017-18 (from $1.2 billion to $865 million).

In 1987, the ABC cost each Australian eight cents a day; in 1987 dollar terms it is now 4c a day – per capita funding has **halved** over 30 years.

**FACT #3**

ABC staff numbers have fallen by 13% since 2013.

- Job cuts at the ABC since 2014 total **1012 positions**, or 829 full-time equivalent staff. There have been 939 redundancies since July 1, 2014. Four hundred of those job losses were a direct result of the 2014 funding cuts.

- Full-time equivalent staff at the ABC numbered 4093 in the 2016-17 financial year, of which 70% were in content making roles. They were 4679 in 2013-14, the year the Coalition government was elected.

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In a ranking of 18 major western countries, Australia came in eighth lowest for per capita funding of public broadcasting. The ABC’s per capita funding is 34% lower than the average of other public broadcasters, including the BBC. Norway, Switzerland and Germany each provide per capita funding to their public broadcasters at least 150% more than Australia.

The ABC serves a population one-third the size of the UK, but does it with a budget one-eighth that of the BBC. Per capita funding to the ABC is half that of the BBC, which had total revenue of $8.8 billion in 2016-17, of which 76% came from TV licence fees.

FACT #4
ABC programming has been cut as a result of decreased funding.

First run Australian drama on ABC TV has fallen by a quarter since 2014-15. In 2016-17, ABC TV screened 48.8 hours of first release Australian drama, compared to 65 hours in 2014-15.

The ABC funded 50 programs including 24 drama series for the same amount as spent by Netflix on two series of House of Cards. Other impacts of funding cuts have included:

- the axing of Lateline, Catalyst and state-based 7.30 programs on ABC TV, music programs on Radio National and reduced programming on ABC Classic FM;
- cuts to language services on Radio Australia;
- closure or downsizing of ABC bureaux in Tokyo, Bangkok, New Delhi and New Zealand;
- shutdown of most TV production in Adelaide in 2015;
- closure of five ABC local radio newsrooms in 2014-15;
- termination of the ABC shortwave service in January 2017;
- axing of ABC FactCheck in May 2016.

FACT #5
The ABC receives much less than other public broadcasters around the world.

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References

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7 Hansard of Senate estimates hearing, May 23, 2018, p. 114.
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