

Supporting the ABC

2007 Election Report

Adequate funding and independence - from political and commercial influence - are critical to the ABC's future.

Supporting the ABC:	Independence	Funding	Radio Australia
Australian Democrats	YES	YES	YES
Greens	YES	YES	YES
Labor Party	YES	?	?
Liberal-National Party Government	NO	?	NO

Friends of the ABC's assessment of support for the ABC is based on the results of its election questionnaire and recent records of the parties.

To date, neither the Coalition nor the ALP has committed to a funding increase to rebuild the ABC. Family First failed to reply to the questionnaire.

Information will be updated on FABC's website www.fabc.org.au as the parties announce further policies.



Where the Parties Stand

- **Liberal-National Coalition:** The Coalition looks to be promising more of the same for the ABC. It has not specified any increased level of base funding. It will retain the present system of appointments that has resulted in the stacking of the ABC Board, and continue to undermine the ABC's independence with targeted funding. The Coalition will maintain the current prohibition on advertising and sponsorship on radio and TV, but not extend the ban to ABC websites.
- **Opposition Parties - Labor, Greens and Democrats:** In opposition, the ALP, Democrats and Greens have been strong supporters of the ABC's political and commercial independence, with the Democrats especially having a sound knowledge of issues concerning the ABC and a long record of promoting and defending it.

The three parties all promise a new system of board appointments that is transparent and merit-based, along the lines of the UK Nolan system. They would reinstate the staff-elected director (also the public's watchdog) to the ABC Board. All are opposed to advertising and sponsorship on ABC TV, radio and ABC websites; but with ALP opposition to ads on websites being limited to, and it failing to define what it means by, 'ABC branded' websites.

The ALP has not specified any increased level of funding for the ABC. It has not committed to restore ABC triennial funding, important because it promotes the ABC's independence from government, as opposed to targeting funding to specific areas.