

To: Chief of Staff **MEDIA RELEASE**

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2014



**ABC Friends [Friends of the ABC]  
National Conference outcome:**

- . ABC Friends to consider standing in WA Senate election**
- . ABC Friends seeks urgent meeting with Minister Turnbull**

"Delegates from across Australia met at ABC Friends [Friends of the ABC] national conference in Melbourne this week," said Glenys Stradijot, ABC Friends spokesperson.

"Strategies to defend the public broadcaster moved to top of the agenda after the Federal Government's recent attacks on ABC News, the announcement of an ABC efficiency review, and doubt cast on Australia Network's future.

"ABC Friends has received hundreds of phone calls, emails and letters in recent weeks. People are expressing their concern and joining.

"At the request of many West Australians who have contacted ABC Friends, the conference unanimously decided that ABC Friends consider fielding candidates in the WA Senate election it is expected will be held this year.

"Our thinking is: With the Government planning to review the ABC, it's time that voters who appreciate the ABC had a say in the ABC's future." The matter will now be further investigated and a final decision made.

"The Conference also resolved to seek an urgent meeting with Communications Minister, Malcolm Turnbull.

"ABC Friends will request transparency and an opportunity for broad community input into Mr Turnbull's efficiency review. It will seek an assurance that the Government will not break Prime Minister Abbott's pre-election promise to maintain ABC funding. It will ask for Australia Network's future with the ABC to remain secure and its independence to be upheld."

**Name change to 'ABC Friends':** "In a proposal that came from ABC Friends young members, the organisation has changed its identification to become shorter and sharper, to 'ABC Friends'." (The legal name of each state remains 'Friends of the ABC' for the present time.)

"ABC Friends' role will remain unchanged. We will continue to fiercely defend Australia's independent national public broadcaster when it is needed. And, like all very good friends, we will also continue to give criticism in any instances we believe it is required," said Glenys Stradijot.

*Ends*

GS:media folder

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