

# Executive Council of Australian Jewry Inc.

הוועד הפועל של  
יהודי אוסטרליה

The Representative  
Organisation of  
Australian Jewry

2nd Floor  
146 Darlinghurst Road  
Darlinghurst NSW 2010  
Australia  
Tel (+61 2) 9360 1600  
Fax (+61 2) 9331 4712  
Web www.ecaj.org.au  
Email info@ecaj.org.au

#### PRESIDENT

Robert M. Goot A.M., S.C.

#### DEPUTY PRESIDENT

Jillian Segal A.M.

#### HON. TREASURER

Peter Wise

#### HON. SECRETARY

Peter Wertheim A.M.

#### VICE PRESIDENTS

Robin Margo S.C. (NSW)  
John Searle (VIC)  
Dr Keith Shilkin A.M. (WA)  
Norman Schueler (SA)  
David Paratz (QLD)  
Daniel Albert (TAS)  
Dr Anita Shroot (ACT)

#### CONSTITUENTS

New South Wales Jewish  
Board of Deputies  
Jewish Community Council  
of Victoria Inc  
Jewish Community Council of  
Western Australia Inc  
Queensland Jewish Board of  
Deputies  
Jewish Community Council  
of South Australia  
Hobart Hebrew Congregation  
ACT Jewish Community Inc

#### AFFILIATES

Australasian Union of  
Jewish Students  
Australian Federation of WIZO  
Union of Progressive  
Judaism – Australia  
Federation of Jewish Aged  
and Community Organisations  
Maccabi Australia Inc  
National Council of Jewish  
Women of Australia

#### OBSERVERS

B'nai B'rith of Australia/NZ  
Council of Progressive Rabbis  
Federation of Australian Jewish  
Ex-Service Associations  
Jewish National Fund  
New Zealand Jewish Council  
Zionist Federation of Australia



## MEDIA RELEASE

### RELIGIOUS PROGRAMMING ON THE ABC

12 February 2009

On Friday 6 February 2009 representatives of the Uniting Church, the National Council of Churches in Australia, the Australian Catholic Bishop's Conference, the Executive Council of Australian Jewry and the Anglican General Synod, met with Mark Scott the Managing Director of the ABC, to discuss religious broadcasts on the ABC.

The faith leaders requested that:

1. the ABC maintain a religious program unit, with appropriate staff, editorial and budget resources;
2. there be a return to the broadcast schedule of a dedicated religious current affairs program along the lines of The Religion Report under the editorial control of the religion unit; and
3. specialist religious journalists continue to be employed and supported by the ABC.

Mr Scott told the faith leaders that the ABC had no plans to scrap the religion unit or to scrap specialisation in reporting, but that it proposed to continue to modify programmes, noting that in the past the Religion Report has been removed from the broadcasting schedule and brought back when appropriate.

He noted that in addition to other programming slots, religion will feature in Background Briefing which will reach a broader audience and allow for in-depth reporting. He also referred to the ABC's plans for future specialisation which will manifest itself in different ways, such as a portal on religion (archival records, research, old programs, transcripts) and program choices, looking at the best way to use all available time slots.

Mr Scott assured the faith leaders that the effects of the religious programming decisions made late last year are being considered within the review of radio currently underway. The appointment of a new head of radio in mid-2009 will be of significance to the review. The review will provide scope to better articulate questions on specialities, digital media and rural broadcasting.

The faith leaders and Mr Scott agreed that 2009 will provide a suitable period to monitor and review the impact of the recent changes which will remain on the ABC's agenda and that the

concerns expressed could be discussed further after that monitoring period.

Contacts for further comment:

Anglican - Martin Drevikovsky, contact via Darrin Davies 07 3835 2210 or 0420 970 605

Catholic - Fr Brian Lucas, 0419 243 959

Jewish - Robert Goot, 02 9360 1600

Uniting - Rev. Gregor Henderson, contact via Penny Monger 0417 416 674