

9 October 2017



**ABC**  
Australian  
Broadcasting  
Corporation

Mr Patrick Wright

ABC Ultimo Centre  
700 Harris Street  
Ultimo NSW 2007  
GPO Box 9994  
Sydney NSW 2001  
Tel. +61 2 8333 1500  
abc.net.au

By email: [foi+request-4072-e19a2247@righttoknow.org.au](mailto:foi+request-4072-e19a2247@righttoknow.org.au)

Dear Mr Wright

**FOI REQUEST – REFERENCE NUMBER 2017-030**

I refer to your email of 5 September in which you sought access to the following documents under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (the FOI Act):

- “a) Copies of all directions and/or guidance provided to all staff in relation to the coverage of marriage equality/same sex marriage in 2016 and 2017;*
- b) Copies of all direction and/or guidance provided to all staff relating to coverage of the marriage equality plebiscite;*
- c) Clarify reports that ABC staff have been directed to refer to same sex marriage rather than marriage equality, and the reasons for doing so?”*

I am writing to clarify the scope of your request so that I may effectively and efficiently identify and locate all relevant documents.

It is unclear if by ‘directions and/or guidance provided to all staff’ you are referring to any singular document sent by one person or a department to All ABC Staff (i.e. every employee at the ABC), or every direction and/or guidance provided at any time on a one-to-one or other basis throughout the period, from any employee to any other employee or group of employees. As presently drafted, your request may require the ABC to search through all of the ABC’s hard and soft copy records, as well as the email records for all employees. This would involve a substantial amount time and resources. Once identified, there will be a further body of work required to make an assessment as to relevance and access. It is likely such a request would be refused on account of its being an unreasonable diversion of the ABC’s resources.

Regarding point c), please note that the FOI Act provides applicants with an opportunity to request access to documents, rather than information. In order to meet the technical requirements of the FOI Act, I will assume that your request is for documents containing the data specified in your request, rather than the information or data itself.

Could you please clarify and refine the scope of your request, including by:

- limiting the time frame of your request specifically; for example, 'documents created between 1 January 2016 and 5 September 2017'
- with regard to point a) and point b), requesting only documents provided to or by specific ABC employees or departments; for example the Editorial Director, News Management, the Managing Director's office, ABC News staff, etc.
- confirming if you are happy for point c) to be framed in the following way or similar:  
*"c) Documents containing directions to ABC staff to refer to 'same sex marriage' rather than 'marriage equality', and/or documents containing information about the reasons why staff should do so"*

Once you have clarified the scope of your request, the 30-day processing period will commence.

Please note that in seeking to clarify your request I am not making representations regarding the existence of any documents, or whether access to them will be granted.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



**Juliana Walsh**  
Corporate Compliance Coordinator