

# Special Broadcasting Service Act, 1991 – The Charter

The SBS was established as an independent statutory authority on 1 January 1978 under the Broadcasting Act 1942. The Special Broadcasting Service Act 1991 (Cwlth) which came into effect on 23 December 1991, established the SBS as a Corporation. This Act, for the first time, gave the SBS a clear charter setting out what the Australian people through the Parliament requires of the SBS as a national broadcaster.

## SBS Charter

The functions which Parliament has prescribed for the SBS are set out in the Charter of the Corporation (s. 6 of the Special Broadcasting Service Act 1991) are:

1. The principle function of the SBS is to provide multilingual and multicultural radio and television services that inform, educate and entertain all Australians and in doing so reflect Australia's multicultural society

2. The SBS, in performing its principle function, must:

- (a) contribute to meeting the communications needs of Australia's multicultural society, including ethnic, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities; and
- (b) increase awareness of the contribution of a diversity of cultures to the continuing development of Australian society; and
- (c) promote understanding and acceptance of the cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity of the Australian people; and
- (d) contribute to the retention and continuing development of language

- and other cultural skills; and
- (e) as far as practicable, inform, educate and entertain Australians in their preferred languages; and
- (f) make use of Australia's diverse creative resources; and
- (g) contribute to the overall diversity of Australian television and radio services, particularly taking into account the contribution of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and the community broadcasting sector; and
- (h) contribute to extending the range of Australian television and radio services, and reflect the changing nature of Australian society, by presenting many points of view and using innovative forms of expression.