

HUGE HIT TO ABC IN 2016 BUDGET

ALMOST \$50M CUT OVER NEXT THREE YEARS

LIVE TALENT AVAILABLE IN SYDNEY

The 2016 Budget Papers reveal more severe cuts to the ABC, adding up to almost \$50m over the corporation's next three-year agreement with the government.

The ABC's Triennial Funding was released as part of tonight's budget.

It revealed a more than \$6m would be axed from the ABC News Division annually, along with millions-of-dollars' worth of cuts to the development of the ABC's online and mobile capacity.

In a media release, the ABC says it will need to withdraw services as a result of the budget cuts.

"ABC News will seek to maintain as many of the [national and regional] initiatives as possible, with a focus on delivering for Australians in regional and outer-suburban areas. However, there will necessarily be some changes to staffing and programming in line with the reduced allocation of funds."

ABC Friends National Spokesman Ranald Macdonald said the ABC was suffering a "death by a thousand cuts."

"On top of that, Tony Abbott cut \$250m, the Australia Network was shut down, and Radio Australia has shrunk."

"So we're going to take this fight up to the government this election, with renewed vigour and with a swelling support base," Mr Macdonald, a former Editor-in-Chief of The Age, said.

"ABC Friends will soon be announcing a list of 20 marginal seats, across the country, that we'll have our army of volunteers campaigning in over the coming weeks."

"We'll be asking them to pledge to vote for any candidate that sees the importance of the ABC and that it should be properly funded"

Ranald Macdonald is available for live or recorded interviews tonight and Wednesday morning in Sydney: 0424 545 516

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