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The Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance - the people who inform and entertain Australia



## Australia's actors stand up for the ABC

Australia's actors have called upon the federal government to stand firm in its election promise to fund the Australian Broadcasting Commission so that it can broadcast more Australian drama.

In an open letter to the Prime Minister published in Tuesday's *Australian* newspaper, actors including Geoffrey Rush, Claudia Karvan, Toni Collette, Rachel Griffiths, Sarah Wynter, Teresa Palmer and Hugo Weaving, asked for an ABC that could continue to show inspiring and entertaining drama, be part of Australian children's lives and be able to meet the challenges of digital media.

"In the 2007/08 financial year the ABC broadcast only 22 hours of Australian drama," said Simon Whipp, Director, Equity, Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance. "This contrasts with between 100 – 175 first release adult drama hours on the commercial stations."

"Labor committed to amending the ABC charter so that it could match the commercial stations. But to meet this promise, the ABC must be properly funded."

A contingent of actors including Roy "Aussie Bob Trimbole" Billing, Corinne Grant, and Patricia Amphlett will head down to Canberra on Wednesday to give the Prime Minister a hard copy of the letter.

They've also enlisted cartoonist First Dog on the Moon to underline in graphic terms why the ABC needs support in the upcoming triennial funding round.

"Like everyone else, we value the ABC and want it to flourish and grow," Whipp said. "It will cost money but the ABC can't do without it, and Australians can't do without the ABC."

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