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ABC TV puts programming focus on digital and quality

ABC TV has announced changes to its leadership structure that recognise dramatic audience behaviour shifts and huge demand for high quality, original content production.

All programming (ABC iView, children's digital and all broadcast TV channels) will move under the responsibility of a single role, the Head of Audience & Digital. Rebecca Heap, formerly Head of Strategy and Digital Products, will take on the new position.

Creative responsibilities will be managed between the Head of Non-Scripted Production and the Head of Scripted Production. Brendan Dahill, formerly Head of Programming, will be responsible for the Non-Scripted team, which will include the Heads of Arts (Mandy Chang), Factual (Steve Bibb), Entertainment (Jon Casimir) and Events (Justin Holdforth).

The Head of Scripted Production, will be responsible for ABC drama and will lead the Heads of Indigenous (Sally Riley), Comedy (Rick Kalowski) and Children's (TBA). The Scripted Production role is currently under recruitment and in the meantime responsibilities will be picked up by the Director of Television, Richard Finlayson.

The Head of Children's and Education role (currently under recruitment) will focus on original content production, and continue to work closely with Children's programmers in the Audience & Digital team. The role will also continue to have responsibility for representing ABC Children's to the global market and local stakeholders.

The reorganisation sees an expanded role for Alastair McKinnon, who will take the role of Deputy Head of Production, which will support all Scripted and Non-Scripted production, particularly in building finance plans and liaising with State and Federal funding agencies.

A new role in the executive team, Head of Partnerships and Policy, will take on the responsibility for partner and stakeholder relationships, policy and strategy – jobs that were previously under the remit of Rebecca Heap. Recruitment for the role has recently commenced.

Director of Television, Richard Finlayson, said the reorganisation would ensure a platform-agnostic approach to reaching audiences and put emphasis on creating centres of excellence within key production areas.

"ABC iView is the number one online TV service in the country. Our audiences are consuming content differently and we need to be programming for the future, now." said Finlayson.

"There is a huge growing demand for high quality, original Australian content. We have an outstanding team. The focus on Scripted and Non-Scripted production recognises the need across these distinct disciplines for concentrated creative firepower, regardless of platform, genre or demographic."

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