

MEDIA RELEASE – for IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Spoiling the ship for a ha'porth of tar

More than 7,000 people have signed a petition, addressed to the Minister for Communications, requesting that SBS television cease interrupting programs with advertisements. The petition was organised by Save Our SBS Inc (www.SaveOurSBS.org).

The Minister, Stephen Conroy, has questioned the legality of interrupting programs with advertisements.

Thousands of viewers have complained direct to the SBS.

Despite this the SBS board has extended the appointment of Shaun Brown, the Managing Director responsible for implementing the new policy.

In defending the interruptions Brown has estimated that the new policy will increase gross advertising revenue by \$10 million a year.

Save Our SBS Secretary Darce Cassidy commented:

“Brown is spoiling the ship for a ha’porth of tar. The \$10 million shrinks to less than \$8 million when commissions and other costs are deducted.

This income is trivial in comparison to the public funding of more than \$189 million.

Chasing the advertising dollar has led the SBS to abandon its public service charter, neglect ethnic communities and trash its past reputation for quality.

Distinguished presenters including David Stratton, Margaret Pomeranz and Mary Kostakidis have left in disgust. The new tabloid version of SBS News, minus Mary Kostakidis, has shed viewers. According to Steve Allen of Fusion Strategy viewing has fallen by 24%. This is a double whammy. Both quality and quantity are down.

As captain Mr Brown should jump overboard rather than take the ship down with him.”

Further comment or information:

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