



THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP
Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

MEDIA RELEASE

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Television audio description for blind and vision impaired Australians

The Morrison Government is helping blind and vision impaired Australians to access audio description services on ABC and SBS television programs.

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, said that the Government will provide the ABC and SBS \$2 million each to introduce audio description services.

Audio description is a verbal commentary that complements the soundtrack of a television program so people with vision impairment can better experience television programs. It is already available for programs on some streaming services – notably for select titles on Netflix and Stan.

“Australia is the only English speaking nation in the OECD not to offer audio description on free-to-air television. We believe that it is long overdue for our national broadcasters to introduce audio description for their audiences,” Minister Fletcher said.

The Government will not prescribe the way in which the ABC and SBS deliver audio description services. The ABC has previously trialled two different delivery methods – via its catch up service and on broadcast television.

“As a result of this funding, the national broadcasters are expected to begin offering audio description services to audiences by 1 July 2020,” Minister Fletcher said.

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