

6 September 2012

Dr Bob Brown
c/o PO Box 83
Cygnet Tas 7112

Dear Dr Brown

Re: SBS *Dateline* program re development of hydropower projects in Sarawak

Given your involvement in the original *Dateline* program of August 21, I am writing to draw your attention to an apology received by Hydro Tasmania from the SBS Ombudsman.

As you would be aware, following the broadcast I wrote to the program's makers and the SBS Ombudsman expressing in the strongest possible terms our concern about the content and tone of the program.

The SBS Ombudsman has agreed with our concerns and issued an unequivocal apology, stating 'the totality of the report was inaccurate and misleading'. She also described the program as 'inaccurate and misleading' and in breach of the SBS Code of Practice as it relates to accuracy, impartiality and balance.

She stated further that the program did not include 'accurate and balancing material that was available' and unduly favoured views critical of the business 'over both facts and appropriate balancing views'. The Ombudsman accepted that the relationship between Hydro Tasmania and Sarawak Energy Berhad was 'misreported and misrepresented'.

It is gratifying to have our claim relating to material misrepresentation by SBS upheld by its own ombudsman in a speedy, comprehensive and unambiguous manner.

I have attached the letter from the SBS Ombudsman for your information.

Yours sincerely,



Dr David Crean
Chair, Hydro Tasmania

cc Mr Kim Booth

SBS Ombudsman

4 September 2012

Mr David Crean
Chair, Hydro Tasmania
4 Elizabeth Street
Hobart TAS 7000

Dear Mr Crean

I write in response to your formal complaint dated 27 August 2012 in relation to the *Dateline* report *The Last Frontier* broadcast on 21 August 2012.

After a review of the program against the provisions of Code 2.2 (Accuracy, Impartiality and Balance) of the SBS Codes of Practice, I found that the program was inaccurate as identified in your complaint.

The statements made about the role of Hydro Tasmania are not accurate. The annual reports of Hydro Tasmania for 2009 to 2010 and 2010 to 2011 are available online. The annual reports reveal that Hydro Tasmania's connection with the Sarawak Energy Board is that Hydro Tasmania provides consultancy and training services through its consulting services business, Entura. That was not correctly and fairly reported.

Further, the totality of the report was inaccurate and misleading. On balance I find that the report breached Code 2.2 in respect of accuracy, balance and impartiality. The relationship between Hydro Tasmania and with Sarawak Energy Berhad was misrepresented and misrepresented.

Put shortly, the program did not include accurate and balancing material that was available, and unduly favoured the views critical of Ta Ann (both Ta Ann Tasmania and Ta Ann Holdings Berhad, the Malaysian company) and Hydro Tasmania over both the facts and appropriate balancing views.

SBS's apologises to Hydro Tasmania for this breach of the SBS Codes of Practice. In light of this finding SBS will broadcast a correction and apology on *Dateline* 4th September, 2012. The wording of the correction is a management matter and is not a duty of the SBS Ombudsman.

If you consider this response to be inadequate you are entitled to take your concerns to the Australian Communications and Media Authority.

Yours sincerely



Sally Begbie
SBS Ombudsman

A story still growing: We know it's a pleasure to spend 45 minutes to see a live news program. Ideally you want to see more and we're right here to help you. Our new website shows you the best way to get the most out of your program. SBS, the world's most multicultural broadcaster, is proud to be the voice of the people.

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