

## Press Release

16 February 2018

# BBC Studios launches its production arm in Australia with its first commission for ABC *Creative Head sought to lead production*

*Stargazing Live 2* will be the first commission for BBC Studios in Australia, following the announcement that BBC Worldwide and BBC Studios are to form a single commercial organisation called [BBC Studios](#) from 1 April 2018.

*Stargazing Live*, the multi-platform television event which inspires the nation to 'look up' and appreciate the unique wonders of space and our cosmos, will be produced for ABC locally by an expert team from BBC Studios' Science Unit in the UK, including Executive Producer Helen Thomas and Series Producer Paul King.

The BBC Studios' Science Unit format was first produced by the same team as a three-day event for ABC by FremantleMedia Australia in March last year.

Lisa Opie, Managing Director, Factual at BBC Studios says: "We're delighted to be working so closely with ABC on *Stargazing Live 2* after the huge success of last year's programme. *Stargazing* is science programming at its very best and Andrew Cohen and his brilliant team in the Science Unit have enjoyed evolving and developing the format specifically for ABC's audience. "

Steve Bibb, Head of Factual at ABC, says: "Stripped over three nights, *Stargazing Live* was a new kind of event programming for ABC in 2017. It reached an incredible number of Australians right across all our platforms and on social media. Our viewers even discovered a new solar system in a major citizen science project. ABC is thrilled to be working closely with BBC Studios to make *Stargazing Live* an even bigger and more exciting event this year."

Alongside this news, BBC Studios has announced its intention to appoint a Director of Production for its production arm in Australia. This role will be tasked with launching and managing the growth of television production in Australia, building creative partnerships between BBC Studios' editorial teams in the UK and Australian broadcasters, driving the

creation of new intellectual property and exploiting the rich potential of BBC Worldwide's format catalogue. The search for this role is being led by [Mission Bay](#) executive search company.

The new Director of Production will report into the international production division which, from April, will be led Anna Mallett, Managing Director, Production and COO, BBC Studios. The role will also form part of the ANZ executive management team. Jon Penn, Managing Director of BBC Worldwide ANZ, will continue to lead the company in this territory as it transitions to BBC Studios in April.

Anna Mallett says: "This commission with ABC is an exciting first step for BBC Studios production in Australia and we look forward to more collaborations as we bring our editorial creativity to new audiences."

Jon Penn says: "The new BBC Studios has got off to a great start in Australia with the *Stargazing Live 2* commission and this new role will spearhead the growth of our Australian production arm. We're looking forward to producing more of our own formats and programs for local clients, who already broadcast many of the quality shows that our expert BBC production colleagues make."

BBC Studios makes over 2000 hours of programming each year across all genres including some of the world's best known and loved brands including *Strictly Come Dancing*, *Doctor Who*, *Top Gear* and *Blue Planet 2*, whilst BBC Worldwide has a wide-ranging formats' catalogue featuring highly successful, long-running BBC shows including *Antiques Roadshow*, *DIY SOS*, *Bargain Hunt* and *Horizon*.

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For more information on the BBC Worldwide and BBC Studios merger, see [here](#)

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NOTES TO EDITORS

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BBC around the world, in a way that is consistent with BBC standards and values. The business also champions British creativity globally.

In 2015/16 BBC Worldwide generated headline profits of £133.8m and headline sales of £1,029.4m and returned £222.2m to the BBC.

For more detailed performance information please see our Annual Review webpage:  
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#### **About BBC Worldwide Australia & New Zealand**

Australia & New Zealand (ANZ) is a priority territory for BBC Worldwide, focusing on growth across all its core business areas. Relocated to McMahons Point in 2015, BBC Worldwide ANZ wholly owns six channels: BBC First, UKTV, BBC Knowledge and CBeebies on Foxtel and Fetch TV in Australia; UKTV and BBC Knowledge on Sky TV in New Zealand; and is responsible for the distribution and promotion of BBC World News which transmits in both countries. BBC Worldwide ANZ distributes great British content from the BBC and other producers to free-to-air, subscription channels and SVOD platforms in Australia and New Zealand. It works with partners to bring BBC Worldwide DVDs, consumer products, entertainment formats and live events to the local market, as well as offering advertising opportunities for the BBC's world renowned [bbc.com](http://bbc.com) news site. In 2015/16, it generated headline sales of £79.1m - a 5.3% increase in local currency - and headline profit of £19.2m.

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