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## **Fairfax exempts executives but still cuts 100 journalists**

The Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance (MEAA), the union and industry advocate for Australia's journalists, is bitterly disappointed that Fairfax Media will persist with savage cuts to its editorial staff.

The decision comes after Fairfax management exempted its executives from making sacrifices while rejecting many cost-saving initiatives suggested by staff that would have saved crucial editorial positions and maintained its ability to continue delivering high quality journalism.

About 20 jobs have been saved but Fairfax says it will still cut about 100 full-time equivalent positions in its metropolitan daily News and Business divisions in Sydney and Melbourne.

Staff had earlier presented management with a job savings plan that included executive wage-freezes, cuts to executive salaries and a reduction in the size of the board. These ideas were rejected by Fairfax management which claimed some of the cost savings were "outside the scope" of its cost savings "proposal".

MEAA Media director Katelin McNerney said: "The loss of these jobs will severely affect Fairfax's news gathering and reporting capability meaning that the real losers will be readers. It is not sustainable to expect the same output with 100 fewer journalists. Something has to give and it will be quality. There simply will not be as many 'boots on the ground' reporting on the stories that matter to Fairfax readers.

"The company has largely rejected sensible and creative alternative cost saving proposals put forward by its journalists – the people who best know and understand the business. The journalists are angry that the company has ruled out any reductions of executive bonuses and salaries. Collectively, the top four execs and the board earned almost \$6.5 million last year," McNerney said.

"The outcome of the consultation process with the company is highly unsatisfactory. The lack of clarity about how and where the redundancies will be achieved only deepens the concerns of journalists who worry about how their newsrooms will operate in future," she said.

Stop work meetings of MEAA members will be held in Sydney and Melbourne at 1pm tomorrow.

**For further comment from a representative of MEAA members at Fairfax, contact:**  
**Marcus Strom (*The Sydney Morning Herald*): 0423 982 485**  
**Simon Johanson (*The Age*): 0433 229 789**