



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Freelancers at Nine Publishing take public action to demand the end to falling rates

Freelance journalists at The Age, Sydney Morning Herald, Australian Financial Review, WAtoday, and Brisbane Times are today intensifying their campaign to demand an end to the declining pay rates they have experienced over the past 20 years.

Contributors to the mastheads are taking to social media to highlight Nine Publishing's failure to address their pay crisis and unsustainable model of work.

Hundreds of journalists are taking action because of a lack of progress in talks with Nine management and the media union, the Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance.

Freelance rates of pay at Nine's publications have gone backwards in real terms by 59% over the past 20 years. MEAA representatives have met three times with management to seek a fair agreement that would support quality journalism, but Nine has refused to create any substantial change to its engagement of freelance workers.

MEAA members are calling on Nine to implement fair rates and annual increases in a signed agreement.

MEAA Media Federal President Michael Slezak said Nine committed to the discussions with freelancers as part of the deal which ended industrial action in July, and it was now time to follow through on that commitment.

"More than 180 freelancers stood side-by-side with in-house journalists during the five-day strike last winter. This joint solidarity secured a landmark commitment from management to discuss freelance rates, conditions and annual increases," he said.

"Media organisations in Australia increasingly rely on freelancers to provide quality journalism to their readers, yet this growing cohort of the media workforce are the most vulnerable because of job insecurity, poor pay, and the lack of basic conditions like superannuation.

"As one of the largest employers of freelance journalists in Australia, Nine must provide respect and dignity to the freelancers who produce so much of the public interest journalism that readers rely on."

Private Media (Crikey, The Mandarin and Smart Company) and Overland Literary Journal have a signed union freelance agreement and News Corp is currently in discussions with MEAA freelance representatives.

**Media Contact: Mark Phillips, 0422 009 011**

📍 PO Box 723 Strawberry Hills NSW 2012 📞 1300 656 513

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ABN 84 054 775 598