



# MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, March 12, 2021

## **Governments must heed the call for greater media diversity**

Greater diversity is needed in Australian media ownership to allow for a wider variety of voices to be heard and to better serve our communities, the Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance will tell a Senate inquiry today.

Australia has one of the most concentrated media sectors in the world, denying consumers a real choice for quality news, limiting job opportunities for journalists, reducing competition for advertisers, and giving inordinate power to a few entities to influence policy.

In its submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications inquiry into media diversity in Australia, MEAA has called for:

- Changes to competition and other laws to prevent mergers that lead to more harmful levels of media concentration.
- The federal government extending the operation of the Public Interest News Gathering program to make it an ongoing annual program.
- Public Broadcasters to be funded in a way that acknowledges the need to provide comprehensive, high-quality cross-platform media content in all parts of Australia.
- AAP's future should be sustained through regular, annual relief grants.
- Consideration of critical measures recommended in the United Kingdom and Canada such as governments directly funding local news and part-funding editorial positions.
- Taxation incentives for media organisations to support existing small and medium entities, and encourage new players.
- Offering consumers the ability to claim media subscriptions on their taxes.
- Government assistance to be reset to ensure funding is available for new media organisations, as well as traditional media companies.
- Regulation of media content should be strengthened and overseen by a single entity.

“There is a clear link between the lack of diversity of media ownership and falling trust in media,” said MEAA Media Federal President Marcus Strom, who will appear at the hearing alongside Federal Vice-President Karen Percy and Chief Executive Paul Murphy.

“The solution must be to encourage and assist new entrants and smaller players so there is a wide range of voices in Australia’s media landscape. We urge all levels of government to take heed of the alarm bells that are ringing loudly right now and take steps to address the crisis in the media sector. After all, a strong media sector means a strong democracy which serves all Australians.”

MEAA will appear before the inquiry at 11.40am.

MEAA’s full submission is available [here](#).

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