



The Hon Stephen Smith  
Australian High Commissioner to the UK  
Australia House  
Strand  
London WC2B 4LA

February 16, 2024

Dear High Commissioner,

I am writing to raise with you concerns expressed by Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance members about potential lack of access for Australian journalists to the High Court hearing on the Julian Assange extradition matter in London on February 20 and 21.

The Court has issued an order indicating applicants for media accreditation from outside of England and Wales do not have the automatic right to attend or have access and will have to prove how their attendance is "in the interests of justice". See sections 4 c) and 4 d) of the Court order for specifics:

<https://www.judiciary.uk/judgments/assange-v-government-of-the-united-states-of-america/>

This would appear to rule out Australian media outlets and journalists from observing and reporting on this hearing via a live stream.

Julian Assange is an Australian citizen and has been a member of MEAA since 2007. The prosecution of Assange by the United States government raises serious concerns for press freedom worldwide.

It is clearly in the public interest for Australian journalists to be able to report on this hearing.

At a meeting on Friday, February 16, a group of MEAA members unanimously passed the following motion:

*This meeting of the Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance of Australia urges the High Court of the UK to ensure full and open access for journalists and the public for these hearings into the extradition case of Julian Assange. There is much at stake and these proceedings have the potential to impact media freedom across the world. It's crucial that justice be seen to be done and that the principles of open justice are adhered to.*

Any assistance or advice you can provide to assist Australian journalists obtain accreditation to have access to a live stream of the court hearing would be deeply appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Percy', with a stylized, cursive script.

**Karen Percy**  
**Federal President, Media Section**  
**Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance**