



**MEDIA RELEASE: Thursday, July 26, 2018**

## **MEAA rejects Nine's takeover of Fairfax**

Nine's takeover of Fairfax will be bad for Australian democracy and diversity of voices in what is already one of the most concentrated media markets in the world, says the union for Australian media workers.

The Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance calls on the ACCC to block the takeover.

MEAA is seeking commitments from Nine and Fairfax that the Fairfax Charter of Editorial Independence is upheld under any merger.

Marcus Strom, president of MEAA Media, said: "Today's takeover announcement is the inevitable result of Coalition's Government's short-sighted and ill-conceived changes to media ownership laws that were always going to result in less media diversity. With ongoing inquiries into the independence and long-term viability of quality journalism under way, the ACCC must block this takeover.

"This takeover reduces media diversity. It threatens the editorial independence of great news rooms at Nine, the Sydney Morning Herald, The Age, Canberra Times, Illawarra Mercury, Newcastle Herald, Macquarie Media and more - right around the country. It harms the ability of an independent media to scrutinise and investigate the powerful, threatens the functioning of a healthy democracy, undermines the quality journalism that our communities rely on for information," Strom said.

"Nine and Fairfax must explain how they intend to defend the integrity of independent quality journalism in any combined entity."

MEAA will demand that all existing employment conditions and entitlements are protected and retained for all workers at both companies; and that existing industrial agreements are respected.

Strom said: "Any further cuts to editorial journalism at Nine and Fairfax would bite into the muscle, bone and soul of the newsroom. The proposed savings of \$50m in two years should come from trimmings to bloated executive salaries and from any back-office rationalisation."

MEAA will be urgently convening meetings of its members at all Fairfax Media newsrooms to discuss the impact of today's announcement.

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**The Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance - the people who inform and entertain**

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