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WIN abandons its Tasmanian audience

WIN TV's announcement that it will pull the plug on locally-produced news bulletins in Tasmania and axe weekend bulletins will deplete the coverage of state issues and local journalism, says the union representing Australian media workers.

The Tasmanian president of the Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance, A. Mark Thomas, said the decision, announced publicly today, was an abandonment of Tasmania by WIN.

WIN said it would begin presenting the news from its head office in Wollongong, and from August 18 would discontinue local news on weekends.

"While the network says it will continue to base journalists and camera people in Tasmania, it's hard to see how this will not result in job losses into the future," Mr Thomas said.

"WIN will reduce its output from 7 bulletins a week to just 5 – a massive reduction of almost 30%.

"This is a sad day for Tasmanian television and journalism - and a network which has almost 60 years of broadcast history.

"There are already very few employment opportunities on commercial television in Tasmania, and this will make it even harder for young journalists to get a start in the industry.

"Just as importantly, with management in Wollongong calling the shots, it will diminish the coverage of Tasmanian news, depriving the viewing audience of a diversity of voices on television."

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