



21 March 2024

Ms Katie Anstee
Manager, Media and News Diversity Taskforce
Australian Communications and Media Authority
PO Box 78
Belconnen
ACT 2616, Australia

Dear Ms Anstee,

**Re: Proposed ABS changes to the classification of
'Journalist and Other Writers' (ANZSCO 2124)**

We appreciate you taking the time to consult with us as the ACMA implements the first stage of its Media Diversity Measurement Framework. The Community Broadcasting Association of Australia is grateful for the ACMA's continuing engagement with our sector in ensuring the framework comprehensively captures the diversity of news and information in Australia.

With almost 5 million people tuning into community radio each week, our sector plays a critical role in providing a voice for Australian communities that are underserved by mainstream media including, young people, First Nations, multicultural, disability, LGBTQIA+, faith-based and regional and remote communities. Community media is critical to the wellbeing and connectedness of these communities. It provides a platform for targeted news, community information, and emergency warnings that are in language and accessible. It tells the stories that matter to them, advocates for them and contributes to social and community cohesiveness.

Community broadcasting is a key contributor to news media diversity indicators: source diversity, content diversity, consumption diversity, level of connection (to a locality), level of originality and level of civic journalism.

News and information is the number one reason listeners tune in to community radio. 49% of weekly listeners name news and information as their main reason for listening to community radio. In regional areas, this figure rises to 62%. That's around 3.7 million people for whom community radio is a key source of news, making community broadcasting an important player in shaping the news agenda, public opinion and political discourse.

With this in mind, it is important for the ACMA to understand that the proposed ANZSCO classification would not capture a large percentage of the people who contribute to preparing community radio news. This is because many of our community journalists would not meet the criteria of a "Bachelor degree or higher qualification or at least 5 years of experience".

The preparation of news content - newsgathering, fact checking, analysis, and verification - at a community broadcaster may be a combination of the expertise of:

- journalists who would be covered by the ANZSCO classification,
- student and trainee journalists,



- people that perform journalism tasks and functions as part of a broader role (ie. broadcasters that do journalism), and
- journalists who would not be covered by the ANZSCO classification but who have unique, in-depth experience with and insight into their own communities.

Community radio is often the only place where people can access news about their community. This is particularly the case for many First Nations communities, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, LGBTQIA+ communities and regional and remote communities. It is increasingly the case, particularly in regional areas, that mainstream media are not providing local news services. Or they are consolidating and centralising news and journalism activity in city centres. In these cases, community broadcasters are facing increasing demand from communities to provide local news and journalism. It is important that the Media Diversity Measurement Framework measures this activity in order to inform good policy and program design.

Excluding community journalists from this important measure in the Media Diversity Measurement Framework would exclude and devalue a vital source of news and information relied upon by communities that are underserved by mainstream media and news journalism services.

The purpose of the ANZSCO classifications are to capture data about the labour market. The ANZSCO is not designed to cover the community media sector which is powered by 17,800 volunteers. The [ANZSCO Scope of Classification](#) specifically states that the ANZSCO does not “cover work not undertaken for pay or profit, for example voluntary work”.

We understand the desire to align with the Australian Bureau of Statistics in order to more easily capture the data necessary for the Media Diversity Measurement Framework report series.

However, the CBAALogo considers that a more fit-for-purpose definition is necessary to meet the objectives of the Media Diversity Measurement Framework, particularly given the scale and impact of the community broadcasting sector and its contribution to media diversity across all parts of Australia. In this regard we refer to our [Media Diversity Measurement Framework submission](#) and the more recent [NewsMAP consultations submission](#).

If you would like to discuss these matters further, please do not hesitate to contact my team through our Head of Advocacy and Communications Reece Kinnane at reece.kinnane@cbaa.org.au or via (02) 9318 9600.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Jon Bisset' with a stylized flourish underneath.

Jon Bisset
Chief Executive Officer