

31 August 2023

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee Chair

Submission to the Murdoch Media Inquiry Bill ('the Bill') Review

The Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBAA) is the peak body and national representative association for 450+ not-for-profit community radio broadcasters across Australia, delivering 500+ radio services on AM, FM and DAB+ platforms as well as streaming, podcasts and catch-up radio online.

As recognised in the National Cultural Policy *Revive: a place for every story, a story for every place* community broadcasting is a vital part of the Australian media landscape in providing a voice for underrepresented and underserved communities, as a key contributor to culture, inclusiveness and social cohesion and in supporting communities through emergencies and natural disasters. That policy acknowledges the need for Government action to “increase support for community broadcasting to deliver local news, tell local stories, and provide a platform for diverse voices...”¹

This submission responds to your inquiry into the Bill which, in short, seeks to establish a parliamentary commission of inquiry into media diversity, media conduct and the impact on Australian democracy.

We note that the terms of reference of the proposed inquiry to be established under the Bill (the “terms of reference”) include the following of relevance to the community broadcasting sector:

- whether the existing system of media regulation in Australia is fit-for-purpose;
- the need for a single, independent media regulator to harmonise news media standards and oversee an effective process for remedying complaints;
- the efficacy of current legal frameworks and mechanisms for managing misinformation and disinformation in the media;
- the culture, ethics and practices of media outlets operating in Australia;
- the impact of online global platforms such as Facebook, Google and Twitter on the media industry and sharing of news in Australia;
- the role of government in supporting a viable and diverse public interest journalism sector in Australia
- any matter reasonably incidental to a matter mentioned in the above paragraphs.

The CBAA welcomes the examination of the above issues as part of ongoing work to improve the quality and accessibility of media for Australians and to support and enhance the important work of the community broadcasting sector as part of a healthy and diverse media.

Around 5 million listeners tune in to community radio each week across Australia, representing around 25 per cent per cent of Australians aged 15 years and older. News and information is the number one ranked reason

¹ Australian government (2023) *Revive: A Place for Every Story, A Story for Every Place* [online] available at <https://www.arts.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/national-culturalpolicy-8february2023.pdf> pp 89

listeners tune in to community radio. 56 per cent of weekly listeners name news and information as their main reason for listening to community radio. In regional areas, this figure rises to more than 66per cent.²

The CBAA has made submissions on some areas relevant the terms of reference, including our [submission](#) to the Australian Communications and Media Authority's 2023 consultation on a new framework for measuring media diversity in Australia. We have also been working with the Government on sector sustainability and a long-term strategic roadmap, which may intersect with the issues raised in the terms of reference.

If the Bill is passed and the proposed commission is established, the CBAA would intend to make submissions relating to the matters above.

Please contact Reece Kinnane, Head of Advocacy and Communications (P: (02) 9318 9621; reece.kinnane@cbaa.org.au) if you need any further information.

Sincerely,


Jon Bisset
Chief Executive Officer

² Community Broadcasting Association of Australia, Community Radio Participation Census (2022)