

Complaints about advertising

Complaints about advertising content on radio and television should go to the Advertising Standards Bureau.

What will ACMA do with your complaint?

If your complaint relates to a code of practice or to a potential breach of the Broadcasting Services Act (that is, a breach of a licence condition), ACMA will consider your complaint carefully and, if necessary, investigate it further.

If your complaint does not relate to a code of practice or a potential breach of the Act, ACMA may not be able to take your complaint further.

Any action taken by ACMA as a result of a breach will depend on the seriousness of the breach. ACMA may:

- make compliance with a code of practice a condition of a licence or
- take administrative action, such as issuing a notice, to ensure compliance with the Act.

ACMA may also recommend to the ABC or SBS the action they should take in response to a complaint.

More information

For more information about codes of practice, contact the relevant industry group. For more information about licence conditions, contact ACMA.

Interpreting service

Interpreter assistance in making a complaint about a radio or television broadcast can be arranged, at cost to ACMA. The Telephone Interpreter Service is a national service and can be contacted during business hours on 131 450.

Australian Communications and Media Authority

PO Box Q500
Queen Victoria Building NSW 1230
Tel 02 9334 7700
Free call 1800 226 667
Fax 02 9334 7799
Email broadcasting@acma.gov.au
Web www.acma.gov.au

INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS

Free TV Australia

44 Avenue Road, Mosman NSW 2088
Tel 02 8968 7100
Fax 02 9969 3520
Web www.freetvaust.com.au
Email contact@freetvaust.com.au

Commercial Radio Australia

Level 5, 88 Foveaux Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010
Tel 02 9281 6577
Fax 02 9281 6599
Email mail@commercialradio.com.au
Web www.commercialradio.com.au

COMMUNITY BROADCASTING Association of Australia

Level 3, 44-54 Botany Road, Alexandria NSW 2015
Tel 02 9310 2999
Fax 02 9319 4545
Web www.cbaa.org.au

Australian Subscription Television and Radio Association Inc.

Level 1, 55 Pyrmont Bridge Road, Pyrmont NSW 2009
Tel 02 9776 2684
Fax 02 9776 2683
Email astra@astra.org.au
Web www.astra.org.au

NATIONAL BROADCASTERS

ABC

GPO Box 9994 in your state capital city
Telephone number in your local phone book
Web www.abc.net.au

SBS

Locked Bag 028, Crows Nest NSW 2065
Tel 02 9430 2828
Fax 02 9430 3700
Web www.sbs.com.au

OTHER COMPLAINTS

For complaints about the content of advertising (in mainstream media), make a complaint in writing to:

Advertising Standards Bureau

Level 2, 97 Northbourne Avenue, Turner ACT 2612
Fax 02 6262 9833
Email asb@advertisingstandardsbureau.com.au
Web www.adstandards.com.au
(The Advertising Standards Bureau accepts written complaints only.)

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Australian Government

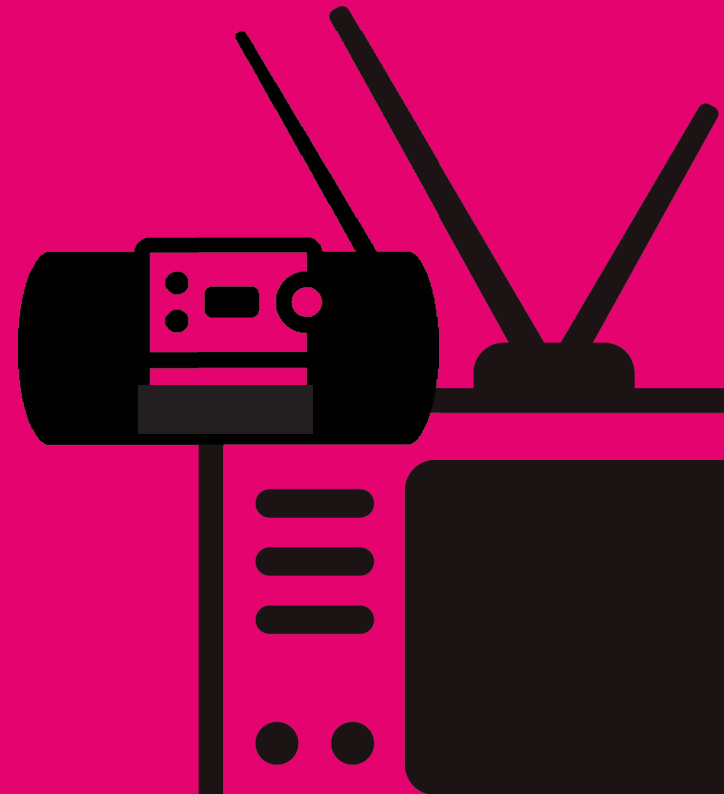
Australian Communications and Media Authority

Australia's regulator for broadcasting, the internet, radiocommunications and telecommunications

www.acma.gov.au

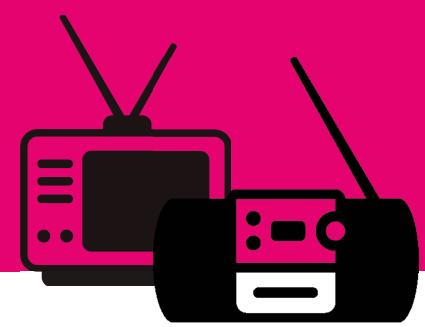
Complaints about television and radio content

How to make a complaint about radio and television programs



You must send your complaint to the station first*

* unless your complaint is about a licence condition, in which case you may complain in writing directly to ACMA.



Complaints to the station

If you hear something on radio, or see or hear something on television which you wish to complain about, you should complain, in writing, directly to the station on which you heard or saw the material. You should provide details of time and date of broadcast, as well as the nature of the material you think has breached a code. You should also keep a photocopy of your signed letter.

All sectors of the broadcasting industry, including the newest sector, community television, have codes of practice which cover the content of the programs they broadcast and how they handle complaints.

If you do not receive a response within 60 days, or if you consider the response to be inadequate, you may refer your complaint to ACMA. If you do this, you must include signed copies of all correspondence between you and the station.

Complaints to ACMA

You may complain directly to ACMA if there is a potential breach of a licence condition under the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* or a breach of the Act, including:

- matters relating to the Children's Television Standards or the Australian Content Standard on commercial television
- a service broadcasting advertisements for cigarettes or tobacco products
- a community radio service broadcasting more than five minutes per hour of sponsorship announcements
- a community television service broadcasting more than seven minutes per hour of sponsorship announcements, and
- a service operating without a licence.

ACMA will only accept a complaint about a matter covered by a code of practice if you have already sent the complaint to the broadcaster and:

- **you are dissatisfied with the station's response or**
- **the station does not answer your complaint within 60 days.**

Privacy

The information in your complaint, including your name and address, will usually be disclosed to the broadcaster concerned during the course of investigating your complaint. Your name and address may also be published in a report or on our website.

If you do not want your details given to the broadcaster, or used in any publication, please indicate your preference for confidentiality in your letter of complaint.

Codes of practice

ACMA has registered codes of practice for all broadcasting sectors except the national sector (ABC and SBS) codes, which are notified to ACMA. The codes are periodically reviewed. ACMA monitors complaints made to the broadcasters to assess whether the codes accord with prevailing community standards and concerns.

All complaints must be in writing.

Copies of the codes are available from the relevant industry body. Contact details are on the back page of this pamphlet.

The **commercial television** industry code of practice is available from Free TV Australia and covers:

- program classifications
- program promotions
- accuracy and fairness in news and current affairs
- advertising time on television
- loudness of ads
- complaints handling and
- placement of commercials.

The **commercial radio** codes of practice are available from Commercial Radio Australia and cover:

- news and current affairs programs
- advertising
- talkback
- discriminatory broadcasts
- offensive language
- emergency information
- Australian music and
- complaints handling procedures.

The **community radio** broadcasting code of practice is available from the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia and covers:

- the responsibilities associated with radio broadcasting to the community
- complaints handling procedures
- general programming guidelines
- guidelines for news and current affairs
- Australian music content
- sponsorship

- volunteers and
- conflict resolution.

The **community television** code of practice is available from the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia and covers:

- community access principles
- station policy for dispute resolution
- program classification and identification
- accuracy and fairness in news and current affairs
- children's television
- sponsorship and community service announcements, and
- complaints handling.

There are codes of practice for subscription television narrowcasting services, open narrowcasting television services, subscription radio narrowcasting services, and open narrowcasting radio services.

The codes for narrowcasting services are available from the Australian Subscription Television and Radio Association and cover:

- general programming issues including discriminatory broadcasts (all services)
- complaints handling (all services) and
- program classification (television).

The codes of practice for subscription television broadcasting services are also available from the Australian Subscription Television and Radio Association and cover:

- suitability for broadcast
- protection of children from exposure to harmful material
- program classifications
- accuracy and fairness in news and current affairs, and
- complaints handling procedures.

Complaints about the ABC and SBS

Complaints about the content of programs on ABC and SBS services should be made, in writing, directly to the station. Please retain a copy of your signed letter of complaint. You may bring a complaint to ACMA if you do not receive an answer within 60 days, or if you consider the response to be inadequate. However, ACMA can only investigate if the subject of your complaint is covered by the codes, which are available from the ABC and SBS.