

Dear Australian Communications and Media Authority,

I would like to raise a point that appears to have been missed in the *Impartiality and commercial influence in broadcast news* document.

‘Impartiality’ and ‘balanced’ are not qualities that we should strive for in our media, because that requires ALL opinions and arguments to be heard fairly. The media should identify and strive to provide for ‘the public interest’, which requires some opinions and perspectives to be effectively censored.

For example, a group that has strong anti-vaccination inclinations should not receive the same broadcast time as a group of professional Australian scientists that research vaccines. Individuals with economically-motivated agendas against climate change initiatives should not be granted the same journalistic respect as scientists who spend their lives researching that issue.

With that being said, I share many of the concerns raised and the positions taken by the members of the public that were surveyed as part of the *Digital Platforms Inquiry Final Report* (2019), particularly the following points:

- Influential agendas other than the public interest. For example:
 - NewsCorp’s relentless support of one single party (Coalition) during election time.
 - The failure of some news outlets to report on the 2019-2020 bushfires, especially the extraordinary scale of the events, and the impacts of climate change.
 - Unqualified religious conservatives being invited to speak on issues of gender, sexuality and/or families.
- Important issues being un-reported, or under-reported. For example:
 - The Afghan papers, which highlighted the failure of the US-led Afghan War in which 41 of our soldiers were killed and should raise questions for our further involvement in such wars.
 - The severity of the current human-driven mass-extinction event, which is especially relevant to Australia (<https://www.sciencealert.com/here-s-how-biodiversity-experts-recognise-that-we-re-midst-a-mass-extinction>).
- Sensationalism in the media. For example:
 - A general focus on celebrity and entertainment news, which obscures news on current affairs.
 - Sensationalist wording choices (e.g. ‘terrorist’ or ‘gangster’ being used to describe non-white, Australian perpetrators of petty crimes).

I thank the ACMA for this opportunity to provide feedback on the impartiality of broadcast news, and trust that the review of regulatory arrangements goes well and produces an outcome that is beneficial both for the Australian public, and for the interests of commercial viability of our media outlets.

Kind regards,
J. Hunter.