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Australian Communications and Media Authority

Media release

Four Corners breaches impartiality requirements in War Memorial story

The Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) has found that the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) breached its impartiality obligations in a *Four Corners* episode about the redevelopment of the Australian War Memorial.

The ACMA investigation found that the 10 March 2025 *Four Corners* episode 'Sacrifice' unduly favoured one perspective through its presentation of the findings of an Australian National Audit Office report, its analysis of the redevelopment consultation process, and its selection and treatment of interviewees.

Acting ACMA Chair Adam Suckling said investigative journalism may legitimately focus on deficiencies and subject matters of public importance to critical scrutiny, but contentious issues must still be presented with due impartiality and sufficient context.

"Investigative journalism plays an important role in scrutinising matters in the public interest. However, the ABC must present contentious issues with due impartiality and provide audiences with sufficient context," Mr Suckling said.

"The cumulative effect of the program's framing, use of strong and emotive language, selection of interviewees and differing interview treatment was that it unduly favoured critics of the redevelopment."

The investigation found that the program accurately reported the Australian National Audit Office~~NAO~~'s overall conclusion that management of the redevelopment project was "~~"~~largely effective~~'~~". However, the program did not explain that this was considered a positive audit result or adequately explain the positive supporting findings, rather the program focused predominantly on deficiencies ~~and did not adequately explain the positive supporting findings or clarify that "largely effective" meant a positive audit result~~.

The ACMA also found that the treatment of different stages of the redevelopment consultation process was likely to leave viewers with the impression that the Australian War Memorial Director's claims were inaccurate, when ~~in actual fact~~ the director and the interviewer were referring to different consultation stages.

The episode did not breach the Code's accuracy requirements in relation to a complaint about its use of Last Post and construction audio. The ACMA found that an ordinary reasonable viewer would have understood that these audio tracks were sourced separately and would not have interpreted the events as occurring simultaneously.

The ACMA will consider and decide on the appropriate regulatory action. ~~The ACMA is currently considering the appropriate regulatory response and will publish the outcome once it is finalised.~~

For more information, please contact ACMA Media on 0438 375 776 or media@acma.gov.au.