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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.

ACMA Chair Nerida O'Loughlin said the ACMA appreciates the variety of approaches that investigative journalism can take, but *Four Corners* must also comply with the impartiality obligations under the ABC Code of Practice.

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

"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's overall conclusion that management of the redevelopment project was 'largely effective'. However, the program did not adequately explain the supporting findings, and instead focused predominantly on the deficiencies identified in the report.

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

The episode did not breach the Code's accuracy requirements in relation to a complaint about its use of Last Post audio alongside 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 having occurred simultaneously.

The ACMA will consider and decide on the appropriate regulatory action.

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