



Australian Government

Department of Communications and the Arts

Dr Heather Smith PSM

Secretary

Mr Peter Saunders
Executive Director
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Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
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Dear Mr Saunders

Media Reform Regulation Impact Statement - final assessment second pass

Thank you for your correspondence dated 26 February 2016, in relation to the draft Media Reform Regulation Impact Statement (RIS) which was recently submitted by the Department for consideration by your Office.

Following your feedback, amendments have been made to the RIS as set out below.

The problem

This section has been updated to more clearly articulate that the current legislative framework governing Australia's media environment is outdated and hinders media operators ability to respond and adapt to commercial pressures, particularly Internet based services. This section also clearly outlines the policy problem for the additional local programming obligations, which is to address concerns raised by stakeholders that changes in control will lead to reductions in discretionary local programming.

The need for government action

This section has been updated to emphasise that as government created the current regulatory settings which restrict changes in control of media businesses, the responsibility to remove these impediments rests with government. The section clearly recognises the need to establish legislative requirements for local programming which would not be produced in the absence of government intervention.

Consultation

Greater detail is now included on the views of stakeholders ascertained during the consultation process. The section includes views from commercial free-to-air broadcasters, subscription television broadcasters and print media on the proposed measures as well as highlighting regional perspectives on the value of local programming and the impact of newsroom closures.

I warrant that the portfolio's net regulatory objective will be met by the end of the relevant reporting period.

I now submit the second pass RIS for your formal consideration.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Heather Smith".

Heather Smith

29 February 2016