

**10 November 2015**  
**Media Release**

## **Free TV welcomes registration of Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice by the ACMA**

Free TV Australia today welcomed the Australian Communications and Media Authority (the ACMA)'s registration of the updated Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice (the Code).

The new Code reflects Australia's contemporary digital media environment and supports a wider range of programming choices for audiences, while ensuring Australian commercial television remains the safest place for viewers to enjoy their favourite TV content.

Free TV Chairman Harold Mitchell AC said: "This Code is a real win for viewers. It will mean a greater variety of programming, while preserving key community safeguards."

The ACMA registered the revised Code following an extensive public consultation process by Free TV, and consideration of its own research, including the outcomes of the recent *Contemporary Community Safeguards Inquiry*.

"A number of changes were made to the proposed Code between consultation and registration. Free TV appreciates the constructive and practical approach taken by the ACMA to this process.

"It has resulted in a Code which reflects commercial television's place in Australia's modern, diversified media economy, where viewers can access content at any time on any number of devices and platforms," Mr Mitchell said.

The new Code:

- Contains no change to the amount of advertising on commercial free-to-air television;
- More accurately reflects how Australians are actually consuming television content;
- Contains key community safeguards in the areas of classification, news and current affairs, advertising, and effective complaints-handling;
- Incorporates a range of protections to limit the exposure of children to potentially unsuitable material, including specific rules for content after 7.30pm, and advertising placement restrictions;
- Is simplified, more concise and consumer-friendly; and
- Ensures commercial television remains Australia's safest and most strongly regulated platform.

Free TV CEO Julie Flynn said: “Viewers can be assured that the updated Code is easy to understand, gives them more choice and delivers on the commitment that free-to-air commercial television remains the safest place to access great content for free.”

The new Code will commence operation from 1 December 2015.

A copy of the revised Code is available from the Free TV Australia website, [www.freetv.com.au](http://www.freetv.com.au).

An overview of the new Code can be found [here](#), and a range of fact sheets on key aspects of the new Code are available [here](#).

**For media enquiries contact Free TV Australia on (02) 8968 7100**

### **About the Commercial Television Industry Code of Practice (the Code)**

Commercial free-to-air television content is regulated under the Code, which is developed by Free TV Australia in consultation with the public, and registered with the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA). The Code regulates content in accordance with community standards; assists viewers in making informed choices about their own television viewing and that of children in their care; and provides effective measures for receiving and handling viewer complaints.

Before registering the Code, the ACMA had to be satisfied that it provides appropriate community safeguards for the matters it covers; is endorsed by a majority of commercial television stations, and; members of the public had been given an adequate opportunity to comment on it. The Code operates alongside other regulatory instruments, including the requirements of the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* (BSA) and other ACMA Standards.

The previous Code came into effect on 1 January 2010. The commercial free-to-air television industry has updated the Code for the modern media era, taking into consideration practical experience and external research<sup>Δ</sup> into community attitudes, standards and expectations about content regulation, and how consumers interact with various media. It also draws on a six-week period of public consultation in which the viewing public had the opportunity to contribute.

<sup>Δ</sup>Sources include the ACMA’s [Contemporary Community Safeguards Inquiry](#) and The Australian Law Reform Commission’s [Classification-Content Regulation and Convergent Media Report](#).