



**AUSTRALIA**

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## **Drama Report Highlights Need For Australian Content Reform**

Screen Australia's Drama Report released today confirms that commercial free-to-air broadcasters remain the largest underwriters of the Australian production sector, directly investing \$114 million in Australian drama, more than any other sector in 2018/19. This represents nearly double the spend of the National Broadcasters and six time more than online streaming services.

Free TV CEO Bridget Fair said: "Free TV broadcasters proudly invest over 80 per cent of their programming expenditure on local content and that includes Australian drama programming. In 2018, commercial free-to-air networks once again broadcast more than 430 hours of first-release Australian drama.

"Despite increasing competition from new platforms, and in the face of the huge structural change facing our industry, we continue to produce great Australian drama on free-to-air screens with programs like *Home and Away*, *Secret Bridesmaids' Business*, *Bad Mothers*, *SeaChange*, *Five Bedrooms* and *Neighbours*.

"Critically, the Screen Australia report also shows that the costs of making drama in Australia have significantly increased. Over the past 10 years, the cost per hour of drama production has doubled.

"The real take-out from today's report is that we need to address the sustainability of the current Australian content regulatory framework. While our competitors are free to respond to changes in audience demand, we are still operating under an onerous and very restrictive regulatory framework that was created in the 1990s and doesn't acknowledge that viewers have moved on.

"The production industry in Australia is thriving and there is no shortage of high quality Australian content available for local audiences. Free TV broadcasters need additional flexibility to adapt to modern viewing habits and we urge the Government to modernise the framework to enable broadcasters to continue delivering the content that audiences want to watch," Ms Fair said.

[Click here to view the report](#)



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**For media enquiries, please contact:**

Bridget Fair  
Chief Executive Officer  
Free TV Australia  
M: 0417 260 478  
E: [bfair@freetv.com.au](mailto:bfair@freetv.com.au)

Neil Shoebridge  
Partner  
SKMG  
M: 0417 511 012  
E: [neil@skmediagroup.com.au](mailto:neil@skmediagroup.com.au)

Andrew Knowles  
Partner  
SKMG  
M: 0449 510 357  
E: [andrew@skmediagroup.com.au](mailto:andrew@skmediagroup.com.au)

**ABOUT FREE TV AUSTRALIA**

Free TV Australia is a leading media industry organisation. It represents all of Australia's commercial free-to-air television licensees through advocacy, innovation and strategic advice. The members of Free TV Australia are Seven West Media, Nine Entertainment Co, Network 10, Southern Cross Austereo, Prime Media Group, WIN Network and Imparja Television.