



Media Release  
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## UK Broadcasting White Paper points the way

The release today of the [UK Broadcasting White Paper](#), which updates UK broadcasting regulation for the digital age, sets a clear direction for reform, with important implications for Australia, according to Free TV Australia.

Bridget Fair, Free TV Australia CEO commented: "Today's announcement from the UK Government demonstrates that whether people can access their local media services on connected devices and are able to watch live and free sport are concerns shared right around the world.

"Free TV has consistently said that ensuring that all Australians have access to their free television services, regardless of what technology is used to deliver it, is the most urgent regulatory issue for the television sector. Free TV looks forward to working constructively with digital platforms and television manufacturers to provide the best outcome for audiences.

"The Australian Government has already prioritised work on the issue of prominence through the Broadcast Working Group, but this announcement from the UK Government gives confidence that we can move even more quickly to a proposed solution that will be in line with comparable international jurisdictions.

"The UK proposal recognises the Australian News Media Bargaining Code model as delivering an effective approach to issues where one or two big tech companies occupy a gateway position for consumers seeking to access local media services."

"Australian policy makers need to act urgently to ensure that our TV screens are not turned into one big search engine where those who pay the most are found first."

As well as guaranteeing that free broadcast channels and BVOD apps such as 9Now, 7Plus, Tenplay and iView are easy to find on connected TVs, the UK Broadcast White Paper has also proposed expanding the UK equivalent of anti-siphoning rules to apply to digital and on-demand rights.

"The anti-siphoning list expires in less than 12 months' time. It is the only thing that ensures that events of national importance are able to be watched live and free by all Australians. The current rules are now more than 30 years old and don't contemplate the exclusive acquisition of iconic sporting events by subscription streaming companies.

"The anti-siphoning list urgently needs to be renewed and its scope expanded to cover subscription streaming services. There is a strong public interest in all Australians being able to share in the triumphs of our sporting champions, which brings us together as a community." Fair said.



“Free TV calls on both the Government and Opposition to endorse the approach being outlined in the UK Broadcast White Paper and to commit to implement similar legislation should they form Government after the election on 21 May”.

Commercial television broadcasting is a fundamental part of the Australian way of life. We provide a universal and free service to all Australians, bringing us together through live sport, trusted local news and Australian entertainment and drama.

Free TV broadcasters enjoy strong support from the public, with more than 4 in 5 people (81%) stating they value commercial television and want it to remain available to all Australians.

Now, more than ever, it is essential that all Australian audiences are able to access Australian content, for free.

Free. For Everyone.

ENDS

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**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, WIN Network and Imparja Television.