

## Free TV calls for balance in streaming quota debate

Free TV Australia today called for a balanced approach to the imposition of streaming quotas, responding to comments by Bryan Brown AM in his address to the National Press Club.

Bridget Fair, CEO of Free TV Australia said, “We agree that Australians love Australian stories, which is why we invest \$1.5 billion every year in Australian content. But if the Government is going to impose content quotas on streaming services, it needs to carefully consider the impact this will have on the Australian public who rely on free services from our local broadcasters.

“The Australian screen sector is booming. With independent data from Screen Australia and the Australian Bureau of Statistics showing that there is more production in this country right now than ever before, the Government needs to be very clear on what problem it is trying to solve.

“Simply adding fuel to an already raging fire of cost escalation in the production sector will have a significant impact on the ability of Australian broadcasters to continue to deliver the Australian programming that our community relies on.

Recently released ABS figures show that over the past 5 years:

- There has been a 60% increase in production businesses created and an 83% increase in employment in the production sector - more than 12,000 jobs.
- Massive growth in production costs by over 130% - including a 143% increase in labour costs and a doubling of rent, leasing and hiring expenses.

“Ultimately it is Australian viewers who will miss out if the skyrocketing costs of production mean that only giant subscription services can afford to buy high quality local content and Australians are forced to pay to watch it.

This is confirmed by recent research conducted by ACCAN showing 57% of Australians on lower incomes experience difficulty paying for home broadband services, let alone multiple streaming services and research by Seven West Media showing that 91% of Australians would not be willing to pay more for Australian content and 81% said they would be “very disappointed” or “disappointed” if free to air content moved behind a pay wall. <sup>1</sup>

“Free TV broadcasters produce 25,000 hours of Australian content every year delivering trusted news, live and free sport, Australian drama and entertainment and coverage of national disasters and breaking news.

“And we provide this content free, to all Australians. 92% of Australians watch commercial television every month. With cost-of-living pressures mounting and growing concerns around the role of social media and digital platforms in our community, we need a strong local media sector more than ever.”

**ENDS**

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<sup>1</sup> The Open Mic community encompasses participants who have opted in to the 7plus research community, and are incentivised to complete the survey. N=944 3As above.n=1293 4 As above n=1293



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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.