

Media Release  
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## Major advertising campaign to protect free sport and TV content launches

Free TV will launch a major television advertising blitz to warn Australians that free content will increasingly disappear without a Federal Government intervention.

The peak body for free TV broadcasters, including Seven, Nine and Ten, is urging the Government to strengthen its Prominence and Anti-siphoning Bill.

The [advertising campaign](#), which will launch nationally today, highlights the increased prospect of free TV disappearing behind paywalls without changes to the legislation.

Free TV CEO Bridget Fair said the Free For Everyone campaign puts the public interest first.

“Australians deserve to know that their access to free news, sport and other content is under threat unless the federal government acts,” she said.

“The bill before parliament correctly acknowledges this threat but needs crucial changes if we’re going to keep access to TV fair and equitable.

“As it stands, people who watch free sport through the internet have no guarantees paid streaming services won’t buy up the rights and lock broadcasts behind paywalls.

“We’re already seeing this with Amazon buying rights to ICC cricket tournaments including the next Cricket World Cup.

“The bill in its current form also sets an unnecessarily long timeframe to secure the availability of free local TV services on smart TVs.

“These two major oversights must be fixed to protect the free universal access of local TV services and sport for every Australian.”

The bill prevents subscription streaming services such as Amazon, Apple and Disney from buying exclusive terrestrial broadcast rights to iconic sporting events like the Olympics, AFL, NRL and cricket, but they can still acquire exclusive digital rights and lock out the millions of Australians who watch free sport on services such as 7plus, 9Now and 10 Play.

In another oversight, the bill only requires the free apps of local broadcasters and a Live TV tile be available on new smart TVs that are manufactured 18 months after the legislation receives assent, meaning millions will miss out in the interim.

Free TV is calling for the following changes to the bill:

#### Prominence

- Reduce the implementation period from 18 months to a maximum of six months
- Extend the rules to existing TVs that receive software updates
- Ensure that viewers are presented with both free and paid options when searching for content
- Require electronic TV guides to include local free TV services

#### Anti-siphoning

- Require that both the free broadcast and free digital streaming rights be acquired by a free broadcaster before the event can be acquired by a pay TV or subscription streaming provider
- Do not extend the automatic de-listing period from six to 12 months as many sporting events are acquired within this timeframe

## **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.