



AUSTRALIA

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Australians face paying up to \$2000 to watch sport under Government's new laws

Free TV Australia warned that Australians are facing annual payments of up to \$2000 a year just to watch their beloved free sports. The peak industry body today called on the Government to urgently reconsider its approach to anti-siphoning legislation following revelations that consumers in the US are facing paying up to \$2400 each to watch the 2024 NFL season alone.

“News from the US today that consumers will need to pay more than \$2400 (USD \$1600) to watch the full 2024 season of NFL should alarm every Australian. US consumers will be forced to subscribe to up to seven separate streaming apps just to watch a single season of NFL.

“This is a clear signal of what we will face in Australia if we don't future-proof new laws to protect Australians' right to free sport on TV, however they access it,” said Free TV CEO Bridget Fair. “With the current cost of living pressures Australians are facing, it is hard to understand why the Government is not stepping in to stop this from happening.”

“In Australia we've always had a right to share the highs and lows of our favourite sporting teams with our family and friends for free, no matter how much we earn. Watching free sport brings the nation together and is part of the Australian way of life. We don't want a two-tier community where the haves can watch sport, and the have-nots miss out.

“Australians should not have to sign up to seven streaming services just to get the sports they currently get for free. And this is the horribly certain future under the new anti-siphoning rules before the parliament which do not protect the right of Australians to watch their free sport if they access their free TV services via the internet.” Ms Fair said.

More and more Australians watch their free TV via the internet using apps like 7Plus, 9Now or 10Play because they don't have an aerial on their house and use their internet connection instead. Almost 40% of Australians do not have access to an aerial right now. It is predicted that more than half of all viewing of free TV services will be via the internet by the end of the decade.

The *Communications Legislation Amendment (Prominence and Anti-siphoning) Bill 2024* will be considered by the Senate in June. Unless it is amended, it will be outdated before the opening siren, because it only guarantees free sport if you watch via broadcast TV, not if you watch your free TV services using free streaming apps.

The Bill must be amended to 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.

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.

“If we don’t fix this glaring omission, it is a certainty that Australians will have to pay to watch the sports they currently get for free. And that’s just not right.”

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Find out more

Go to <https://www.freeforeveryone.com.au/> to find out more about supporting free sports for all Australians.

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ABOUT FREE TV AUSTRALIA

Free TV Australia is the peak industry body representing commercial television broadcasters. 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.