

Media Release
16 May 2024

Free TV broadcasters deliver record spend on Australian content

Free TV today welcomed the release of the [ACMA report](#), *TV in Australia: Spending on commercial TV programs for FY23*, which documents a record spend on Australian content by Free TV broadcasters.

Key points from the report are:

- \$1.67 billion spent by commercial television broadcasters on Australian content, a record amount;
- 87% of all program expenditure was for Australian content, an increase of 8% on the previous year;
- Cost of sports rights continues to increase, up 17%;
- Record investment of \$413 million in trusted news that Australians can rely on;
- 16% increase in expenditure on regional news, despite challenging market conditions and unreasonable spectrum fees remaining in place. The only provider of local tv news bulletins in Australia is regional commercial television.

Free TV CEO Bridget Fair said: “Providing quality Australian programming for free to all Australians is part of our DNA. We are committed to bringing Australians the trusted news, live and free sport and local entertainment programming that they love.

“These numbers are a powerful demonstration that Free TV broadcasters see themselves as the home of Australian content. No other media platform makes the consistent investment in our local content year in, year out.

“This level of investment is a clear reason why the Australian Government should ensure that our policy settings support the sustainability of the commercial television sector. If we are going to have a Future Made in Australia, a strong local media industry is central to that objective.”

A number of key policy objectives are needed to support our local commercial television sector:

- Anti-siphoning laws that enable all Australians to watch sport on free TV no matter whether they use an aerial or through an internet connection;
- Rules about prominence on Smart TVs make commercial broadcasters' services accessible and easy to find, including on existing devices;
- Policies support public interest journalism in the face of rising mis- and disinformation, and Meta's refusal to pay for news under the News Media Bargaining Code framework;
- Fairer competition rules to address the power of digital platforms who benefit from an increasing share of advertising revenue, but don't share broadcasters' responsibility for producing accurate news and information;
- The spectrum taxes paid by commercial broadcasters, which are the highest in the world, and 52 times higher than the equivalent per capita charge on US broadcasters, are abolished.

As commercial broadcasters increasingly invest in the future of Australian content, it's time for Government to take action to ensure that all Australians can continue to turn to their local TV stations into the future.

ENDS

For media enquiries, please contact:

Bridget Fair
Chief Executive Officer
Free TV Australia
M: 0417 260 478
E: bfair@freetv.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, WIN Network and Imparja Television.