



AUSTRALIA

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## Free TV networks unite to showcase vital role in ‘Shaping a Nation’

***Australia’s leading commercial television networks will unite at Parliament House in Canberra tonight to demonstrate their critical role as the nation’s trusted news source and cultural unifier, at a time when free TV broadcasters face outdated regulatory frameworks and mounting competitive pressures.***

The CEOs of Free TV Australia, Seven, Nine, Ten and WIN, along with network stars, will gather for a Parliamentary Showcase to highlight the unique value of free commercial television services for all Australians.

With OzTam’s Streamscape report showing Australians spending a massive 70% of their television viewing time with free-to-air television, the networks will demonstrate their unmatched reach in connecting communities nationwide.

Hosted by Ally Langdon (*A Current Affair*, Nine), Matt Shirvington (*Sunrise*, Seven) and Julia Morris (*I’m A Celebrity... Get Me Out Of Here!*, Ten), the event will be attended by the Hon Prime Minister Anthony Albanese MP, Minister for Communications and Sport the Hon Anika Wells MP and parliamentary leaders, and will showcase the critical role commercial television plays in shaping the nation through trusted news, live and free sport, and Australian entertainment and drama programs.

The re-establishment of a Parliamentary Friends of Free TV Group, co-chaired by the Hon Tim Watts MP and Senator the Hon. Jane Hume, will also be formally announced at the event. This is a non-partisan group that promotes and supports a strong future for commercial television in Australia.

Free TV CEO Bridget Fair said: “With around 20 million viewers watching free TV services every week, we are a fundamental part of the Australian way of life, continuing to unite the nation by delivering moments of national and cultural significance. Commercial television broadcasters spend \$1.62 billion on Australian content annually and deliver over 25,000 hours of home-grown content, a commitment unmatched by any other platform. Our 390 news bulletins are watched by 11.4 million Australians each week, ensuring we have trusted local news that provides facts we can all rely on.

“And don’t forget live and free sport, something that brings the whole country together. Whether it’s the AFL Grand Final, the mighty Matildas or the Olympic Games, Free TV broadcasters make sure every Australian can share in these important moments, no matter how much they earn.

“But the future of these services is not guaranteed. We need the right policy settings to protect Australians’ right to free television services.

As Australians cut household budgets, there is one line item that won’t change – the zero cost of free TV.”

## **Free TV member CEO's have highlighted the key challenges facing the sector:**

**Seven West Media CEO and Managing Director, Jeff Howard**, said: "Commercial free-to-air television relies entirely on advertising revenue to fund the production of news, sport, and Australian content that our communities depend on. Any further regulation of advertising must be carefully considered and take this into account. If restrictions are imposed, it is critical that there are appropriate mitigations to offset the impact on free-to-air commercial broadcasters."

**Nine CEO, Matt Stanton**, stressed: "Australian Sport brings us together as a nation and so should the anti-siphoning laws that are supposed to protect this for every Australia. Right now there's nothing to stop big tech and global streamers swiping up all streaming rights for our favourite sports. They're unregulated, unaccountable and have no interest in what unites us. Let's close the loophole and keep sport free on your TV."

**Network 10 President, Beverley McGarvey**, emphasised: "Free-to-air television remains a cornerstone of Australian society, providing a universally accessible and reliable platform for news, sport, and entertainment. As we approach 70 years, our industry invests \$1.62 billion annually in local content. The continued viability of free-to-air television is facing unprecedented challenges, making government recognition of our essential role, as well as the recent measures to address regulatory inefficiencies, especially significant. We welcome the current suspension of the Commercial Broadcasting Tax and encourage its permanent removal to ensure the long-term sustainability of this vital service."

**WIN Corporation Chief Executive Officer, Andrew Lancaster**, said: "Thirty six percent of Australians live in regional areas. They have higher cost of living pressures and rely more heavily on their regional TV channels, particularly during times of crisis and natural disasters. It is vital that these communities have equal access to free television services. Government support for infrastructure costs to maintain their connection is urgent and critical."

**Chief Executive Officer of Imparja Television** – Australia's only Aboriginal-owned, not-for-profit commercial television station – **Amy Graham**, added: "Broadcasting in remote and very remote communities is a unique challenge, but is an essential service for communities outside metropolitan and regional centres. Infrastructure and skills investment will ensure that these audiences continue to stay connected and actively participate in Australian cultural and democratic life."

As Australia's media landscape undergoes rapid transformation, Free TV remains the most accessible and widely consumed form of television content, delivering professional, fact-checked journalism to every corner of Australia – from Sydney's suburbs to flood-affected regional communities.

The showcase comes as commercial television faces what international regulators describe as a "triple threat": competition from global streaming giants, audiences increasingly turning to online services, and mounting funding pressures on traditional broadcasters.

### **Network stars attending the Parliamentary Showcase**

Matt Shirvington, Michael Usher, Johanna Griggs, Karina Carvalho, Ally Langdon, James Bracey, Sylvia Jeffreys, Scotty Cam, Tara Brown, Julia Morris, Sandra Sully, Andy Allen, Caitlyn Chalmers, Michelle Heyman.

### **Key facts about Free TV:**

- Free to air TV reaches **19.3 million Australians every week**<sup>1</sup> and is available in **100% of homes**.
- **25,285 hours of Australian content**<sup>2</sup> broadcast annually.
- **390 trusted news bulletins** each week (plus news updates, current affairs programming, Community Service Announcements), reaching **11.4 million Australians**<sup>3</sup>.
- **\$1.625 billion spent on Australian content in FY24**, including **\$408 million on news** (\$35.2 million in regional areas)<sup>4</sup>.
- **Regional communities rely on Free TV** for local news, local advertising and sport – support is critical.
- **9.5 million Australians**<sup>5</sup> watch live and free sport every week. Everyone should be able to watch iconic sports for free.
- Free TV BVOD viewing grew **33.4% in FY25**<sup>6</sup>, with nearly **70% of household viewing**<sup>7</sup> on the main TV free-to-air.
- Free TV supports **16,200 full-time equivalent jobs**<sup>8</sup> across the country, contributing to local economies in cities, regional and remote areas.

### **ENDS**

#### **For media enquiries, please contact:**

Bridget Fair  
Chief Executive Officer  
Free TV Australia  
M: 0417 260 478  
E: [bfair@freetv.com.au](mailto:bfair@freetv.com.au)

### **ABOUT FREE TV AUSTRALIA**

Free TV Australia is the peak industry body representing Australia's commercial television broadcasters - Seven West Media, Nine Entertainment Co, Network 10, WIN Network and Imparja Television.

#### **Sources**

<sup>1</sup> VOZ Total TV Seven, Nine, Ten, ABC, SBS. When Watched Cumulative Reach July 2025, Average full week reach July 2025, All sport genre content, all news sub-genre content, all Content.

<sup>2</sup> Australian Communications and Media Authority, *2024 Commercial Television Compliance with Australian Content Requirements* <https://www.acma.gov.au/broadcaster-compliance-tv-content-standards> August 2025

<sup>3</sup> VOZ Total TV Seven, Nine, Ten When Watched Cumulative Reach July 2025, Average full week reach July 2025, All sport genre content, all news sub-genre content, all Content.

<sup>4</sup> Australian Communications and Media Authority, *TV in Australia: Spending on commercial TV programs* <https://www.acma.gov.au/commercial-tv-program-expenditure>

<sup>5</sup> VOZ Total TV Seven, Nine, Ten When Watched Cumulative Reach July 2025, Average full week reach July 2025, All sport genre content, all news sub genre content, all Content

<sup>6</sup> TVMAP VOZ 5.0, TTL PPL. National Average Audience, Full Fin Year July 1 2024 to June 30 2025 vs same calendar days YOY, 0600-2400. Data: When watched including spill.

<sup>7</sup> Streamscape Q1 2025 report. OzTAM Panel Data and VOX 2025 – Total Minutes Viewed. Markets: National. Broadcast TV: ABC, Seven, Nine Ten, SBA. BVOD: ABC iVeiv, 7plus, 9now, 10 Play, SBS ON Demand. Data Parameters: January – March 2025.

<sup>8</sup> Deloitte Access Economics, *Everybody Gets It: Revaluing the economic and social benefits of commercial television* <https://www.freetv.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Everybody-gets-it-2022.pdf> 2022