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Free TV Welcomes Release of Government's Future of Television Consultation Paper

Free TV Australia today welcomed the release of the Government's discussion paper on the future of free TV delivery, *Technology scenarios for free-to-air television*, by the Hon Anika Wells MP, Minister for Communications, at today's Uniting a Nation Parliamentary Showcase in Canberra.

The paper sets out three possible technology scenarios for the delivery of free TV over the medium to longer term and invites views on the future mix of broadcast and online delivery, spectrum, and the investment needed to sustain this essential sector. Free TV has long called for the interests of the 20 million Australians who watch free TV every week to sit at the heart of any review of this kind and will be pressing that principle throughout the consultation.

Its release comes as new Deloitte Access Economics research, launched at today's Showcase, confirmed the economic and cultural role commercial television plays in Australian life – as a trusted source of news and a shared civic space that helps sustain social cohesion, while contributing billions of dollars to the economy.

Free TV Australia CEO Bridget Fair said the release of the paper marked the start of a critical and necessary process.

"We thank Minister Wells for starting this important work today, at an event where our [Towards a More United Nation: The economic and social benefits of commercial television](#) report demonstrated just how much value free television delivers for Australians," Ms Fair said.

"The Government's paper rightly recognises that technology change is a normal part of media markets, and that the key task now is planning in partnership with Government and industry counterparts for the future to ensure the value free TV provides continues to be delivered for all Australians. Whatever technology choices are ultimately made, the interests of Australian viewers must come first.

"Free TV broadcasters are already investing in both broadcast networks and online services to meet the future the paper describes, and Government has a role to play too, in setting the right policy and regulatory settings and supporting the infrastructure Australians need.

"Free TV will engage fully and constructively with this process, working closely with the telecommunications sector and other stakeholders, because getting the answer right matters enormously – not just to broadcasters, but to the millions of Australians in metro, regional and remote areas, who depend on free, universal access to the TV content that matters to them."

Free TV Australia will make a detailed submission to the consultation and looks forward to continued engagement with the Government as this work progresses.

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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 the peak body representing Australia's commercial television licensees through advocacy, innovation and strategic advice. The members of Free TV Australia are Southern Cross Media Group, Nine Entertainment Co, Paramount Network 10, WIN Network, and Imparja Television.