

## FACSIMILE

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SUBJECT: Submission

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Having just come across DCITA's Issues Paper regarding "Proposed Reforms to the Broadcasting Regulatory Powers of the ACMA", I attach an extremely hurried submission, aware though I am that the closing date was the 9<sup>th</sup>.

Certainly W.A., and probably all FABCs, would take the view that the political power of the media industry has long forced politicians to allow the media industry to escape accountability for the grossest excesses. Now that the situation has been reached that an issue is not an issue unless the mainstream media is willing to make it an issue, the lack of accountability of the media industry is a threat to democracy itself.

Freedom of expression is useless if no-one can hear, because the lack of political visibility may mean that important issues receive little attention and therefore become exacerbated.

Blogging is not a serious alternative for ordinary people. It is an alternative for the Hard Right, because the existence of the various influential Right-wing think-tanks with a high media profile will mean that such bloggers will have their messages acted on swiftly and effectively.

WA FABC agrees with the views expressed in the Background in the Issues Paper. We have no confidence in self-regulation. Most importantly, ACMA should have the power to similarly regulate the print media and related websites.

Undeclared payment of money to media organisations or personalities to influence their reporting is really bribery/secret commissions. Failure of a personality to declare that payment whenever mentioning relevant issues, at the time and in context, should be an offence, whether civil (including broadcasting bans for a period of time) or criminal. ACMA should also have the (optional) power to refer apparent breaches of criminal laws (such as incitement) to the appropriate authorities.

Attached are semi-relevant extracts from other WA FABC documents.

Yours sincerely,

*R. Raven*

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