

30/3/2006

The General Manager  
Digital Broadcasting and Spectrum Management  
Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts  
GPO Box 2154  
Canberra, ACT, 2601

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are writing to express our concern at the proposed changes in Australian Media Ownership laws.

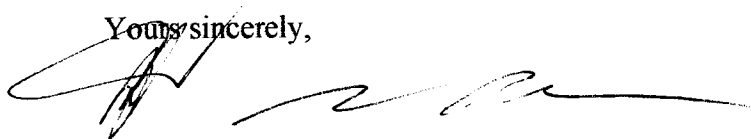
The proposed laws will undoubtedly lead to greater concentration of media ownership. This would occur in a country in which already only two companies, i.e. News Ltd and PBL, dominate. These companies would simply further increase their reach. Along with this increase in influence would go an increase in power to influence both voters and governments: to the detriment of the public good.

The above concerns make it even more vital that the independent role of the ABC is protected. ABC Board appointments should be based upon merit and commitment to independent public broadcasting, rather than ideological support for the current Government's position. In particular, membership of the Board should continue to include an elected staff representative to provide a strong voice for preserving the integrity of the ABC in fulfilling its Charter.

The ABC needs to be funded adequately to do its job. It needs to be able to produce its own programs of high quality and not have to pander to requirements of advertisers, which would undermine the very meaning of an "independent" broadcaster.

Finally, the allocation of media licences should remain in the hands of the Australian Communications and Media Authority. If the government were to have the power to grant or refuse to grant licences to certain individuals or corporations, it could lead to favouritism or exclusion of more or less favoured players. As a result there would be even less likelihood of independent comment or investigation of government policies and activities.

Yours sincerely,



Mark and Nicole Parker