

# **CLOSING THE GAP AND FIRST NATIONS PEOPLES REPRESENTATION IN THE MEDIA**

**A report by the Lowitja Institute in partnership with  
First Nations Media Australia**

**May 2022**

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## Introduction

Media has the power to reflect and create the relationship between First Nations peoples and non-Indigenous Australians and shape how First Nations peoples and non-Indigenous peoples see themselves, their status and contribution to the nation. The media provides a primary role in informing Australians about issues that affect First Nations peoples and a central role in society's construction of what and who is seen to be First Nations. First Nations peoples and their voices, however, are largely absent in media and most stories about First Nations peoples are produced and presented by non-Indigenous broadcasters, organisations, journalists and presenters.

This report sets out the importance of First Nations representation in media and its relationship to life outcomes of First Nations peoples. It makes recommendations for how this issue can be incorporated into the implementation of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (National Agreement) by proposing indicators for monitoring First Nations representation in media and identifying opportunities to develop a performance monitoring framework over time. The report also identifies opportunities to strengthen reporting against existing commitments in the National Agreement relating to First Nations peoples' experiences of racism, access to information, digital inclusion and representation in media.

The National Agreement, signed by all Australian governments and the Coalition of Peaks in 2020, goes some way to recognising the importance of First Nations representation in the media and its impact on improving the life outcomes of First Nations peoples. It commits governments to a central role for First Nations media organisations in the communications of the activities under the National Agreement; includes an outcome and target relating to digital inclusion and First Nations peoples' access to information and services to enable informed decision-making regarding their own lives; and a target to reduce the experience of racism experienced by First Nations peoples.

However, the commitment to the role of First Nations media organisations is yet to be fully realised by governments, and the ability to track progress on First Nations peoples' access to information, digital inclusion and experiences of racism is limited by relevant data sources. Importantly, the National Agreement, and associated reforms, policies and programs being developed in response, do not grapple with the impact First Nations representation in media has on all the Closing the Gap outcomes.

## Background to the report

In late 2021, First Nations Media Australia (FNMA) commissioned the Lowitja Institute to examine the matter of First Nations representation in media and conduct a review of existing and potential opportunities to address data gaps which demonstrate the value and impact on First Nations representation in media. A grant from Community Broadcasting Foundation made this report possible.

In preparing this report, the Lowitja institute worked with FNMA and a small reference group, who provided input into the report findings and

recommendations. Daniel Featherstone, Mandy Taylor and Scott Avery generously formed the reference group, and shared their time, expertise and commitment to a thriving First Nations media industry as an essential service in First Nations communities that provides access to locally relevant information services, supports social and economic development and strengthens First Nations' unique and collective cultural identity for all Australians.

This report adds to the voices highlighting the importance of First Nations representation in media and draws attention to its impact on the life outcomes of First Nations peoples. In reviewing the importance of First Nations representation in the media and its impact on First Nations peoples, the Lowitja Institute drew from a range of previous reports and research and acknowledges the efforts of others in bringing this issue to the fore. A bibliography summarising key reports and articles reviewed is provided at the conclusion of the report. These reports demonstrate the considerable amount of work done over the last 30 years in Australia and internationally, the importance of First Nations media representation and efforts to enhance and measure it. This collection of data sources, both quantitative and qualitative, were reviewed for they build a broad picture of First Nations engagement, perceptions, participation, and access to different forms of media, and demonstrate the need for comprehensive and consistent national data on First Nations representation.

To inform the report's recommendations, the Lowitja institute also thanks the following organisations and individuals for their input and knowledge:

- Reconciliation Australia
- Productivity Commission
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW)
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)
- The National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA)
- McNair Yellow Squares
- Community Broadcasting Association Australia (CBAA)
- Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA)
- Archie Thomas, Research Fellow, Indigenous Land and Justice Research Hub, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Technology Sydney.

## Recommendations

This report makes recommendations for governments, First Nations media and other media organisations for advancing First Nations representation in media. It proposes strategies for highlighting the importance of First Nations voices in media and its connection to health and wellbeing. It also proposes a monitoring system for the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, through which the commitments made can be honoured, measured and evaluated.

### Recommendations:

1. All governments acknowledge that First Nations representation in media is critical to the life outcomes of First Nations peoples and is a key issue for the implementation of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

2. All governments, working in partnership with First Nations Media Australia, First Nations media organisations and non-First Nations media organisations, develop policies to guide government agencies and media organisations in increasing First Nations representation in the media, and include these policies in governments' Closing the Gap implementation plans.
3. The Commonwealth government work in partnership with First Nations Media Australia and state and territory governments to develop a national, coordinated funding scheme to support existing and emerging First Nations media and increase the reach of First Nations media organisations.
4. The Commonwealth government work in partnership with First Nations Media Australia to develop, define and require quotas of First Nations media content as a proportion of Australian content and First Nations staffing as part of new quotas and reporting requirements for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) and the Special Broadcasting Services (SBS) and other media organisations licensed in Australia.
5. The Commonwealth government invest in a round table process, co-led with First Nations Media Australia, to bring together all governments, Coalition of Peaks representatives, First Nations media and non-First Nations media organisations to:
  - a) Define First Nations representation in media and develop a set of indicators, using **Table A** as a basis for discussions.
  - b) Agree and adopt a national performance monitoring framework to track First Nations representation in media and explore options to adopt a target to increase First Nations media representation.
  - c) Develop and agree a public statement comprising an agreed definition, and indicators, and a commitment to monitoring and increasing First Nations representation in media as a key component of Closing the Gap.
6. All governments commence national level monitoring and reporting on First Nations representation in media as part of existing National Agreement reporting mechanisms using available data collection opportunities (identified in **Table B and C**) and incorporate agreed actions arising from the roundtable process as part of implementing the National Agreement.
7. The governance and decision-making structures under the Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap consider the recommendations in this report and how the National Agreement can be used to take immediate steps towards improving First Nations representation in the media.

## First Nations representation in media and Closing the Gap

### Media representation

The media has a powerful and permeating influence on how we understand and make sense of the world around us. With First Nations peoples making up just over

3 percent of the Australian population, most Australians gain their information, analysis and reasoning of First Nations peoples, their culture, issues, and events through media.

For this report, representation refers to how media portrays First Nations peoples, communities, experiences and cultures. Media includes television, print, radio and digital forms of communication and covers news, current affairs programs and entertainment content.

Research examining how First Nations peoples are represented in media overwhelming reveals that First Nations peoples are portrayed as being problems for Australian society. First Nations peoples are depicted as being personally responsible for situations that have structural, systemic and historical roots, and efforts to progress the rights of First Nations peoples are seen as challenging the 'harmonious Australian way of life'<sup>12</sup>. Research<sup>3</sup> also highlights that, when presenting stories of poor life outcomes where the subject is a First Nations person or community, Indigeneity is often highlighted first and portrayed as a key contributing factor. Conversely, achievements and global recognition by First Nations peoples in areas like sport and the arts are commonly positioned as being 'owned' by all Australians and where First Nations peoples have overcome their Indigeneity to achieve success. A key contributing factor to how First Nations peoples are represented is that the majority of the content is owned, produced and delivered by mainstream, non-Indigenous media organisations and presenters, where First Nations voices are drowned out and they are not able to share their perspectives effectively.

The consequences of how First Nations peoples are represented in media is threefold. Firstly, the lack of First Nations ownership and under-representation of First Nations stories and perspectives in media contributes to the marginalisation and erasing of First Nations peoples and their voices. For non-Indigenous Australians, the overwhelming representation of whiteness on morning breakfast shows, for instance, reinforces the notion that Australia is first and foremost a country of white people and excludes First Nations peoples. For First Nations peoples, they turn on media to see only scarce representation of their own peoples and culture. This sends a message that First Nations peoples come second to the non-Indigenous majority<sup>4</sup>.

Secondly, how First Nations peoples are represented in media shapes the relationship between non-Indigenous Australians and First Nations peoples. For non-Indigenous Australians it influences how they relate to, engage with, talk about and to First Nations peoples at a very practical level, including in determining whether First Nations peoples are 'deserving' of and can access healthcare, educational support, and employment and housing opportunities. In making judgements about who is deserving, non-First Nations media and its representation of First Nations

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<sup>1</sup> See: Indigenous Peoples Representation In Mainstream Media Of Australia Sociology Essay, 2018, <https://www.ukessays.com/essays/sociology/indigenous-peoples-representation-in-mainstream-media-of-australia-sociology-essay.php?vref=1>

<sup>2</sup> Stoneham, J. 2014, The Portrayal of Indigenous Health in Selected Australian Media

<sup>3</sup> See: April, M. 2017, An Outsiders Insight: How The Media Represents Aboriginal People, [wordpress.com](http://wordpress.com)

<sup>4</sup> See: McCausland, R. 2004, Special Treatment – The Representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People in the Media. *Journal of Indigenous Policy* – Issue 4 pp. 84 – 98.

peoples can also contribute to ascribing values to the public safety of First Nations peoples compared to non-Indigenous Australians. This can have serious consequences for social and economic life outcomes of First Nations peoples and their livelihoods<sup>5</sup>. This is especially true for the 45 per cent of First Nations people who live with some form of disability or long-term health condition<sup>6</sup>. By any measure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disabilities are amongst some of the most disadvantaged of all Australians. This is often because they face multiple barriers to their meaningful participation within their own communities and the wider community. This includes fair access to, and representation in the media. Inclusion of people with disability in the media is one of the most effective ways to improve community attitudes towards, and increase inclusion of, people with disability<sup>7</sup>.

For First Nations peoples, how they are represented in media shapes their self-belief, value, how they view their status, culture and identity. This can have a detrimental impact on mental health. The 1991 Royal Commission into Deaths in Custody noted that "the more that the dominant culture reports negative stories about Aboriginal people, the more that Aboriginal children feel bad about being Aboriginal". The Royal Commission also noted that "the racism, stereotyping of Indigenous peoples and inaccurate reporting of the media has a devastating impact on the lives of First Nations people and has caused distress and even suicide in some communities"<sup>8</sup>.

Thirdly, representation also impacts on government responses to matters that concern First Nations peoples and influences related policies, programs, available levels of funding and legislation. For example, academic articles published over several years emphasised the benefits of swimming pools for First Nations children's health, with comparatively little impact on government funding. However, a small number of positive front-page stories resulted in swimming pools being put in remote communities. The same can be said of front-page negative stories, where stories on the level of funding for First Nations programs and services, presented without context, have contributed to a retraction in government expenditure<sup>9</sup>.

## National Agreement on Closing the Gap

The National Agreement is concerned with improving the lives of First Nations peoples. It was negotiated through an historic partnership between all Australian governments and the Coalition of Peaks and was agreed in 2020. It commits governments to 17 socio-economic outcomes for First Nations peoples and targets, with associated indicators to monitor and track progress. Importantly, the National Agreement also sets out how governments will change how they work

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5 See: McCallum, K. Waller, I. Meadows, M. 2012, Raising the Volume: Indigenous Voices in News Media and Policy. Vol 142, Issue 1.

6 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019. Children living in households with members of the Stolen Generations. Cat. no. IHW 214. Canberra: AIHW.

7 Commonwealth of Australia (Department of Social Services) 2021, Australia's Disability Strategy

8 See: Sweet, M. 2009, Is the media part of the Aboriginal health problem, and part of the solution? - Inside Story

9 See: Sweet, M. 2009, Is the media part of the Aboriginal health problem, and part of the solution? - Inside Story



with First Nations communities and organisations through four priority reforms. Each priority reform also has its' own outcome, target and associated indicators. The following National Agreement commitments by governments have relevance to this report and First Nations representation in media:

- **Socio-economic outcomes and targets:** The National Agreement includes 17 socio-economic outcomes and targets that all governments have committed to and where progress is monitored and made public. First Nations representation in media has a significant impact across many, if not all, of the socio-economic outcomes and targets.

Racism and negative stereotyping towards First Nations peoples in media is well documented, as is the detrimental impact racism has on First Nations health, wellbeing and life outcomes. Racism, as the expression of racist beliefs, emotions or behaviours and practices that maintain or exacerbate inequality of opportunity among an ethnic-racial group, has direct and indirect impacts on health and contributes to reduced access to employment, housing and education. If genuine action is to be taken to improve the lives of First Nations peoples and close the gap in life outcomes between First Nations peoples and non-Indigenous Australians and meet the outcomes and targets of the National Agreement, governments need to grapple with and address representation of First Nations peoples in media. This includes developing policies and programs that support increased First Nations representation in media, led by First Nations organisations. Disability is included in the National Agreement Commonwealth Closing the Gap Implementations Plan as a cross-cutting priority. As a result it is critical that all governments ensure that "investments under each of the socio-economic targets are inclusive, accessible and equitable for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability as this will help meet Closing the Gap targets"<sup>10</sup>.

- **Outcome 17 and the associated target and indicators:** This outcome refers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples having access to information and services to enable informed decision-making regarding their own lives. This has strong relevance to First Nations representation in media due to its impact on how First Nations peoples receive and understand information about their lives. Addressing outcome 17 calls on governments to include efforts to increase First Nations representation in media and support its associated program and policy responses.
- **Priority Reforms:** Central to the National Agreement is a commitment from governments to change the way they work with First Nations peoples, organisations and communities, built around four priority reforms. In developing actions, policies and programs to achieving the 17 socio-economic outcomes, governments have committed to apply the priority reforms.

*Priority Reform One* is a commitment from governments to share decisions with First Nations organisations and communities on matters that relate to the outcomes of the National Agreement. In addressing First Nations

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<sup>10</sup> Commonwealth of Australia, Commonwealth Closing the Gap Implementation Plan 2021.



representation in media, governments should be working in partnership with First Nations media organisations to develop policy and program responses.

*Priority Reform Two* is a commitment from governments to build and prioritise First Nations organisations, particularly community-controlled organisations, and their sectors to deliver programs and services related to the outcomes of the National Agreement. In addressing First Nations representation in media, governments should be investing in the role of First Nations community-controlled organisations to increase production and reach of First Nations media content and develop and train First Nations peoples to work in media.

*Priority Reform Three* is a commitment from governments to transform their agencies and institutions so that they are much more accountable to Closing the Gap and improving outcomes for First Nations peoples and are safe for First Nations peoples to access. In addressing First Nations representation in media, governments should be identifying opportunities with media organisations they fund and license to be more accountable and responsive to how they represent First Nations peoples and issues, the content they produce and the number of First Nations peoples working in their organisations.

For example, the Australian Government recently announced requirements for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) and the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) to provide additional reporting on how much of their content across various categories is local, bringing them in line with commercial broadcasting requirements enabling consistent measuring of Australian content – news or drama or documentary – across both the commercial free-to-air broadcasters and ABC and SBS. The ABC will also need to report annually on staff numbers in regional and remote Australia, as well as hours of programming tailored to those audiences. Further, the Australian Government is examining options for local content quotas for streamlining services such as Netflix. In line with the National Agreement, the Australian Government and the Department of Communications should be considering First Nations content as a proportion of Australian content and First Nations staffing as part of the new quotas and reporting requirements.

*Priority Reform Four* is a commitment from governments to support First Nations led data development and to share locally-relevant data with First Nations organisations and peoples. Governments have agreed that disaggregated data is required to obtain a comprehensive picture of efforts on Closing the Gap and that improved collection, access, management and use of data is required for the benefit of First Nations peoples. In addressing First Nations representation in media, governments should be looking at ways for existing data to be collated and shared with First Nations organisations and for further measures to be developed as determined by First Nations organisations and peoples.

- **Implementation plans:** All governments and the Coalition of Peaks are required to develop implementation plans relating to their responsibilities under the National Agreement. As highlighted above, governments should be including actions that improve and promote First Nations representation in media as part of implementing the National Agreement and achieving its outcomes. Implementation plans are reviewed and updated annually, and actions to address First Nations representation in media could be included in the 2022 update and reported on annually thereafter.
- **Communications Plan and role of First Nations media:** The National Agreement commits First Nations media organisations, particularly community-controlled media, to a central role in communicating associated activities so that culturally relevant messages are shared by First Nations organisations. This includes the development of an ongoing joint communications strategy where First Nations media have a central role in the promotion and distribution of material and information across a range of mediums to First Nations peoples, as well as to other Australians. Specific actions will be included in this Plan to ensure accessibility for First Nations people with disability. Governments and the Coalition of Peaks have also agreed that all communications under the Agreement should be widely accessible, including for those living with disability, and help to preserve First Nations' languages. The implementation of these commitments provides a significant opportunity to invest in improvements in First Nations representation in media.
- **Monitoring and reporting:** The National Agreement commits governments to several monitoring and reporting requirements that present opportunities for tracking First Nations representation in media. These commitments provide a substantial opportunity to begin to develop a picture of and monitor and report on First Nations representation in media at the national level and are explained in the section below.

Whilst First Nations representation in media has substantial relevance and impact on the outcomes of the National Agreement, governments are yet to fully acknowledge its significance in its implementation and in a way where significant progress can be made and monitored. It is proposed that governments and the Coalition of Peaks review the possibilities available under the existing National Agreement commitments and available data to take forward actions on both increasing First Nations representation in media and its reporting and monitoring.

## Factors that contribute to media representation

There are many factors that contribute to strengthening First Nations representation in media. Governments, First Nations media organisations, non-Indigenous media organisations and regulatory bodies all have a role to play. In recommending that governments develop policies and programs to strengthen First Nations representation in media, it is important to understand the contribution each can make.

Media representation is impacted by who owns the media channel, who produces, delivers and presents the content, the reach of the content and the representation, training and understanding of staff working in media organisations. Having media

channels owned and created by, for and about First Nations peoples is key to First Nations peoples' being able to determine how they are represented in media and where they can tell their own stories in their own way.

The First Nations community-controlled media sector arose from First Nations peoples wanting to tell stories about their own peoples and issues and on their own terms. In owning and controlling First Nations representation in media, the sector has an important role in keeping First Nations culture strong, reporting on news and current affairs from a First Nations perspective, connecting communities and preserving First Nations' languages. At the same time, the community-controlled media sector educates and builds bridges with the wider community, from a First Nations' perspective of representation. Further, the community-controlled media sector provides employment to around 500 people across Australia and is a training ground for communication skills development for First Nations peoples, where people can then move on to employment in non-Indigenous media organisations. This is despite a reduction in funding levels for First Nations media organisations since the 1990s, through the Indigenous Broadcasting Program.

Non-Indigenous media organisations also have a role and in recent times there have been notable efforts to increase First Nations representation in media. More media outlets have First Nations reporters and presenters than ever before and there has been a rise in First Nations co-produced film content. For example, the ABC has increased the number of First Nations journalists on presenting on mainstream issues as part of its regular programming. However, there is much more that non-Indigenous media organisations can do including employing more First Nations staff in a range of positions within their organisations, including in senior management and decision-making positions, developing clear policies on the production of First Nations content reporting on First Nations issues or matters involving a First Nations person and commissioning First Nations content from First Nations media organisations.

The Australian government has multiple roles and avenues to contribute to First Nations representation in media. Most obvious is through its establishment and funding of the ABC and the SBS which also includes the National Indigenous Television (NITV). The Australian government can regulate quotas and provide funding for First Nations content and staffing levels. The Australian government has recently demonstrated its preparedness to mandate increased Australian content and regional and remote content and stories for the ABC and SBS. There is opportunity to define how much of the Australian content should be First Nations content and to recommend First Nations staffing levels. The Australian government also sets requirements for other media organisations that operate in Australia and there is an opportunity through licensing arrangements to seek reporting on First Nations content and staffing and set First Nations content quotas that apply to commercial broadcasters and streaming services.

With national leadership and collective will, there is much that can be done to increase First Nations representation in media and could be being done under the existing National Agreement commitments.

# Measuring First Nations representation in media

Whilst the issues around First Nations representation in media has long been documented there is not an agreed definition of First Nations representation in media and indicators that would enable national monitoring and reporting.

The following provides a suggested definition and indicators of First Nations representation in media that provides a basis for negotiation between parties.

To support possible adoption in the National Agreement at a later stage, the suggested framework has been organised in a similar way to outcomes in the National Agreement where there is a target and indicators (drivers and contextual). It has been informed by reference group considerations and an examination of what defines media and representation in the mainstream context as well as matters that are significant to First Nations representation in media. The intention is also to identify indicators that can be quantified and measured in a repeatable way.

**Table A: suggested definition, outcome, target and indicators to monitor First Nations representation in media**

**DEFINITION:** First Nations representation in media is how media portrays First Nations peoples, communities, experiences and cultures. Media includes television, print, radio and digital forms of communication and covers news, current affairs programs and entertainment content, and encompasses the ownership, production and delivery of content.

**OUTCOME:** First Nations peoples are sharing and telling their own stories about matters that impact on them

**TARGET:** To progressively increase the level of First Nations owned and led stories and content in media

**INDICATORS:**

**Drivers:**

1. Content – Levels of First Nations stories and content across different sources (news and current affairs programming, Australian drama)
2. Medium – Levels of First Nations stories and content across different mediums (TV, radio, print, online, digital)
3. Reach and range – Levels of distribution of First Nations stories and content (audience reach, screen / audio time, number of outlets, range of service)

4. Production – Proportion of First Nations stories and content produced by First Nations led and controlled media organisations
5. Presence – Levels of screen, audio and online presence of First Nations peoples (number, percentage, proportion of population, position / role)
6. Ownership – Proportion of ownership of media outlets by First Nations organisations (by community-controlled and other First Nations organisations)
7. Employment – Number and proportion of First Nations peoples working in media organisation (by position, First Nations media organisations and other media organisations)

**Contextual information:**

1. Proportion of First Nations peoples reporting experiences of racism and other forms of discrimination that intersect with racism, such as disability.
2. Proportion of First Nations peoples who trust media, by media type (First Nations media and non-Indigenous media organisations)
3. Proportion of non-Indigenous Australians who agree they are proud of Australia's First Nations cultures
4. Proportion of non-Indigenous Australians who agree First Nations peoples are responsible for their own disadvantage

Once agreed and to raise public awareness of the importance of First Nations representation in media and encourage voluntary monitoring and reporting, it is proposed that the definition and indicators of First Nations media representation be made public. An agreed set of definitions and indicators would also support research organisations to adopt them as part of their own examinations into First Nations media representation.

It is further proposed that the definition and indicators are made public with an accompanying policy statement that would set out all parties' commitment to improving First Nations media representation, noting the impact it has on the lives of First Nations peoples, reconciliation efforts and Closing the Gap. The policy statement should also acknowledge the role that each party has in improving First Nations media representation and initial reporting commitments parties might make.

Taken together, this would be an important step towards a national performance monitoring framework of First Nations representation in the media.

## **Monitoring representation and existing data collection opportunities**

There is an opportunity to start to measure and monitor First Nations representation in the media at the national level now, and as an action towards a dedicated performance framework.

Table A (above) provides suggested indicators to measure First Nations representation in media specifically which are not currently included in the National Agreement. To demonstrate that it is possible to measure progress towards these indicators, **Table B** (below) maps out existing and potential opportunities for data collection against these proposed indicators.

Importantly, there are already other relevant indicators committed to as part of the National Agreement's Priority Reform Three and Target 17 that relate to First Nations representation in media. **Table C** (below) lists these commitments and maps out existing or potential data collection for these indicators. These data collection opportunities provide the means for governments to commence reporting on First Nations representation in media as part of the existing commitments in the National Agreement.

Existing data collection opportunities are available through a range of mechanisms, including:

- by government commissioned or developed surveys, for example the 2014 Department of Finance led *Media consumption and communication preferences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander audiences* survey.
- through commissioned surveys by industry or non-government organisations, for example the 2016 Remote Indigenous Media and Communications survey and the Australian Reconciliation Barometer.
- by social research and media monitoring organisations, for example the McNair Indigenous Media Omnibus.

It is possible to repeat or expand on these methods or reinstate previous media monitoring activities as part of an ongoing performance monitoring framework. ACMA currently collects a range of compliance reporting data from Broadcasting and Video on Demand providers which is reported publicly in aggregate form. With revised policy parameters in place from government or voluntary reporting from providers, this data could be used for other purposes.

There are also new data collection opportunities through:

- specifying First Nations content as part of legislative requirements on Australian Content and Children's Television Standards and reforms arising from the Australian Government's media reform green paper.
- encouraging voluntary reporting from media organisations on Australian content to include reporting on First Nations content and representation and including this in ACMA reporting.
- point in time content analysis of programming and media content across a range of indicators.
- the upcoming National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, due in 2023-24.



**Table B: Data collection opportunities for draft indicators of First Nations media representation as outlined in Table A**

PROPOSED INDICATORS	CURRENT DATA COLLECTED	EXISTING DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITY	NEW DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITIES
<b>DRIVERS</b>			
<i>Content</i> – Levels of First Nations stories and content across different sources (news and current affairs programming, Australian drama etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>McNair Indigenous Media Omnibus 2010 – 2014</li> <li><a href="#">Remote Indigenous Communications and Media Survey (2016 only)</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ACMA currently collects Australian content related information from commercial television broadcasters (e.g. Seven, Nine and Ten) and subscription broadcasters (e.g. Foxtel). This information is collected to demonstrate compliance with legislated content quotas or investment schemes for Australian content.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commission content analysis sampling (see bibliography for examples)</li> </ul>
<i>Medium</i> – Levels of First Nations stories and content across different mediums (Screen, TV, radio, print, online, digital)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media monitoring samples – reinstatement of daily government media monitoring service of all First Nations related media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sample analysis of CBAA program monitoring data for community radio</li> <li>Commission sampling of mainstream media outlets</li> <li>Content reporting under revised ACMA requirements</li> </ul>
<i>Reach and range</i> – Levels of distribution of First Nations stories and content (audience reach,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Media consumption and communication preferences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander audiences,</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ACMA licensing data on the Register of Radiocommunications Licences includes the name and contact details of all</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update and repeat the 2014 <i>Media Consumption and communication preferences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait</i></li> </ul>



PROPOSED INDICATORS	CURRENT DATA COLLECTED	EXISTING DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITY	NEW DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITIES
screen / audio time, number of outlets)	Department of Finance 2014 survey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ACMA mapping of reach of licensed services</li> </ul>	radiocommunications licensees including broadcasters. For broadcasters it includes the licence. However, it does not identify licensees or licences that are First Nations, though such ownership and/or audience objectives may sometimes be inferred from the identity of the licensee. Some information about potential reach and range may be inferred from looking at the boundaries of each licence area on the ACMA's list of licence areas.	<i>Islander audiences survey</i> by the Department of Finance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ First Nations Media sector survey</li> </ul>
<i>Production</i> – Proportion of First Nations stories and content produced by First Nations led and controlled media organisations			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Commission content analysis sampling</li> </ul>
<i>Presence</i> – Levels of screen presence of First Nations peoples (number, percentage, proportion of population)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Commission content analysis sampling</li> <li>▪ Content reporting under revised ACMA requirements and ABC / SBS funding agreements</li> </ul>

PROPOSED INDICATORS	CURRENT DATA COLLECTED	EXISTING DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITY	NEW DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITIES
<p><i>Ownership</i> – Number and proportion of ownership of media outlets by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations (community-controlled and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations)</p>		<p>The ACMA collects and publishes information about:</p> <p>the controllers of commercial television and radio licences and 'associated' newspapers – including where multiple media operations have a common controller (Media Control Database and Register of Controllable Media Groups)</p> <p>foreign persons who hold a 2.5% or greater shareholding in commercial television and radio licences and 'associated' newspapers (FOMA Register)</p> <p>This information is publicly available and recorded in registers and databases maintained by the ACMA on its website.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Desktop analysis of ACMA databases on media control and ownership</li> <li>▪ First Nations Media sector survey</li> </ul>
<p><i>Employment</i> – Number and proportion of First Nations peoples working in media organisation (by position, First Nations media</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Census occupation data</li> <li>▪ Mediaverse 2022 Australian Media Landscape Report – Medianet journalist survey – looked at employment and pay of journalists across</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CBAA – community radio census survey</li> <li>▪ Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs) reporting on employment from media organisations, for example</li> </ul>

PROPOSED INDICATORS	CURRENT DATA COLLECTED	EXISTING DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITY	NEW DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITIES
organisations and other media organisations)	Australian media. Survey of 983 journalists conducted in Oct/Nov 2021 – <b>not disaggregated by Indigenous status</b>		ABC, SBS and other media organisations have RAPs and report employment data through this process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ First Nations Media sector survey</li> <li>▪ Analysis of existing government data on First Nations media organisations.</li> </ul>
<b>CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION</b>			
Proportion of non-Indigenous Australians who agree Australia is a racist country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Australian Reconciliation Barometer, Reconciliation Australia, every two years (next due 2022)</li> <li>▪ <b>ABS general social survey – cultural tolerance and discrimination; trust; Involvement in Social, Community support, and Civic and political groups (2020 most recent) – not disaggregated by Indigenous status</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ RA open to further discussion on content of ARB but survey is currently at its capacity for the number of questions</li> <li>▪ Amend ABS general social survey to include Indigenous status</li> </ul>	
Proportion of non-Indigenous Australians who agree they are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Australian Reconciliation Barometer, Reconciliation Australia, every two years (next due 2022)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Amend ABS general social survey to include Indigenous status</li> </ul>	

PROPOSED INDICATORS	CURRENT DATA COLLECTED	EXISTING DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITY	NEW DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITIES
proud of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>ABS general social survey</b> – cultural tolerance and discrimination; trust; Involvement in Social, Community support, and Civic and political groups (2020 most recent) – <b>not disaggregated by Indigenous status</b></li> </ul>		
Proportion of non-Indigenous Australians who agree Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are responsible for their own disadvantage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Australian Reconciliation Barometer, Reconciliation Australia, every two years (next due 2022)</li> </ul>		
Proportion of First Nations peoples who trust media, by media type (First Nations media and non-Indigenous media organisations)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ORIMA Research First Nations Omnibus Survey – add specific questions</li> </ul>

**Table C: Data collection opportunities for Outcome 17 Data Development Indicators**

INDICATORS (IDENTIFIED FOR DATA DEVELOPMENT in OUTCOME 17)	CURRENT DATA COLLECTED	EXISTING DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITY	NEW DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITIES
<p>Measures relating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in the media, in particular community-controlled media, including (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Number of First Nations media and Community Controlled media organisations</li> <li>○ Audience growth for First Nations media and Community Controlled media organisations</li> <li>○ Sources of news content among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations</li> <li>○ Portrayal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in mainstream media</li> <li>○ Diversity of media content broadcast (including health, education, community service information)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Media consumption and communication preferences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander audiences, Department of Finance 2014 survey</li> <li>▪ McNair Indigenous Media Omnibus and Remote Indigenous Communications and Media Survey (2016 only)</li> <li>▪ 2014-15 NATSISS has data on if respondents watched Indigenous TV or listened to Indigenous radio as part of social activity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The National Census includes occupation data so this could be analysed for the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people working in media (self-reported)</li> <li>▪ CBAA National Listener Survey (conducted bi-annually by McNair)</li> <li>▪ Analysis of ACMA licencing information on community broadcasters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Update and repeat the Media consumption and communication preferences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander audiences, Department of Finance 2014 survey</li> <li>▪ Monitoring and reporting of government data on licencing of First Nations community-controlled media organisations</li> <li>▪ Conduct analysis of CBAA program monitoring data for community radio.</li> <li>▪ Add specific questions in the next NATSISS due approx. 2024.</li> <li>▪ Add specific questions to the ORIMA Research First Nations Omnibus Survey</li> <li>▪ Commission specific content analysis sampling</li> </ul>

INDICATORS (IDENTIFIED FOR DATA DEVELOPMENT in OUTCOME 17)	CURRENT DATA COLLECTED	EXISTING DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITY	NEW DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people working in mainstream media across all levels of media operations (e.g. managers, media practitioners and technical)</li> </ul>			
<p>Percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with access to home phone, mobile and/or internet</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Measuring Australia's Digital Divide: The Australian Digital Inclusion Index 2020</li> <li>▪ 2014-15 NATSISS includes the following questions:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In the last 12 months have you accessed the internet?</li> <li>○ Did you access the internet at home?</li> <li>○ How often?</li> <li>○ Where?</li> <li>○ Did you use the internet to access government services?</li> <li>○ Which ones?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review and expansion of Australian Digital Inclusion Index</li> <li>▪ 2022/23 NATSIHS – new digital inclusion (internet usage) questions under consideration. No comparable non-Indigenous data will be available for the new questions. Closest possible comparison is possibly in the Disability, Ageing and Carers survey and its questions on internet use.</li> <li>▪ Mapping the Digital Gap project collecting this data for 12 remote communities 2022-24.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ NIAA Indigenous Digital Inclusion Plan – data collection needs</li> </ul>

INDICATORS (IDENTIFIED FOR DATA DEVELOPMENT in OUTCOME 17)	CURRENT DATA COLLECTED	EXISTING DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITY	NEW DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITIES
Proportion of regional and remote communities with access to infrastructure to enable broadcast and telecommunication services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measuring Australia's Digital Divide: The Australian Digital Inclusion Index 2020</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and expansion of Australian Digital Inclusion Index</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Desktop analysis of publicly available ACMA data on broadcast licences<sup>11</sup></li> <li>NIAA Indigenous Digital Inclusion Plan – data collection needs</li> </ul>
Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people receiving digital literacy training by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NIAA Indigenous Digital Inclusion Plan – data collection needs</li> </ul>
Measures relating to proportion of Government communications material produced and distributed by First Nations media		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media monitoring</li> <li>Government procurement target monitoring and reporting on procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public reporting of any existing government data.</li> </ul>

<sup>11</sup> ACMA has advised that “ACMA has published licence area total population counts for all determined broadcasting licence areas and provides the legal descriptions (and representative spatial boundary data) of those licence areas which would assist those wanting to make their own assessment of population coverage and population profile using ABS data (see <https://www.acma.gov.au/broadcasting-licence-areas>). However for licence areas not associated with the [BSA s30 determination](#) of licence area populations, the published population counts are linked to a disclaimer about not being formally determined population counts. It is possible to match ACMA licence area data with ABS data to provide an indication of the proportion of a licence area's population that identified as Indigenous at the last census. However, licence area boundaries do not show actual signal coverage. As result, this data would still be subject to an unknown level of error.”



INDICATORS (IDENTIFIED FOR DATA DEVELOPMENT in OUTCOME 17)	CURRENT DATA COLLECTED	EXISTING DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITY	NEW DATA COLLECTION OPPORTUNITIES
organisations (Media buying agencies)		Islander businesses and organisations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reporting under the Closing the Gap Agreement PR 2 and the communications plan.</li> </ul>	
Response to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people reporting racism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ AHRC complaints data under the Anti-Discrimination Act</li> </ul>		

## The National Agreement reporting opportunities

The National Agreement provides a significant opportunity to bring together existing information and data on First Nations representation in media into comprehensive national picture and where progress can be tracked at various intervals. The following outlines the potential opportunities within the current reporting and review commitments National Agreement.

- *Annual implementation reporting by governments and the Coalition of Peaks:* covering activities under the four priority reforms, the socio-economic outcomes and other commitments as set out in their implementation plans. Noting the relevance of First Nations media representation to Priority Reform Three and Two in particular, and the impact on all socio-economic outcomes, Parties could include reporting on activities to improve First Nations representation in media and the associated impact.
- *Productivity Commission Dashboard:* an online dashboard to enable monitoring of each jurisdiction's progress and contribution towards achievement of targets under the National Agreement. The dashboard is updated as new data becomes available.
- *Annual data compilation report:* prepared by the Productivity Commission, providing an annual point in time snapshot of the dashboard material and other available information to tell the story of progress against the National Agreement as is currently done through the Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage Report.
- *Productivity Commission Review:* providing a comprehensive review of progress under the National Agreement every three years. It includes an analysis of progress on Closing the Gap against the priority reforms, targets, indicators and trajectories, and examines the factors contributing to progress, including by drawing on evaluation and other evidence. There is a significant opportunity for the Productivity Commission to examine the role of and changes in First Nations media representation on the outcomes of the National Agreement as part of the three yearly review.
- *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led review:* carried out within twelve months of each review by the Productivity Commission, capturing the lived experiences of First Nations peoples and communities on the implementation of this Agreement and may include advice on potential changes to the National Agreement. The scope and conduct of the review are to be agreed by governments and the Coalition of Peaks, on the advice of the Coalition of Peaks. There is an opportunity to consider First Nations media representation within the review and whether it should be recommended to be formally included in the National Agreement going forward.
- *Data development plan:* committing governments and the Coalition of Peaks to develop data in areas that are important for our understanding of First Nations outcomes but cannot be measured currently and where further work

is required. Data for development has already been identified in the National Agreement and includes areas that are relevant to the contribution of First Nations media organisations in supporting improved and increased First Nations media representation. Agreed actions to progress the monitoring of First Nations representation in media should be included in the data development plan.

It is recommended that governments, through the existing arrangements identified above in the National Agreement, start to report annually on the picture of First Nations representation in media, and this is made public.

## **Moving towards a national performance monitoring framework for First Nations representation in the media**

Whilst there are existing data collection and reporting opportunities to start to provide a picture of First Nations representation in media and monitor its progress, there is further work that can be done to ensure the issue of representation is properly recognised, addressed and monitored in a dedicated way.

Over time, it is proposed that all governments, the Coalition of Peaks and media organisations agree to a target to increase First Nations media representation and a purpose designed national performance monitoring framework.

The National Agreement already provides formal reviews where there is an opportunity to include a new target and fully recognise the impact of First Nations representation in media on life outcomes between First Nations peoples and other Australians.

## **Next Steps**

To take forward the issue of First Nations representation in the media, it is proposed that the Commonwealth government, in partnership with FNMA, convene a national roundtable discussion of governments and First Nations and non-Indigenous media organisations to consider the recommendations and matters raised in the report and agree a way forward.

It is also proposed that members of the governance and decision-making structures of the Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap meet to consider the recommendations in the report and how the National Agreement can be used to take immediate steps towards improving First Nations representation in the media.

# Bibliography

## Annotated Bibliography

### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission & Indigenous Management Australia, 1999, *Digital Dreaming: National Review of Indigenous Media and Communications*, ATSIIC: ACT**

This report is the result of a yearlong study undertaken by Indigenous Management Australia (IMA). This review was initiated by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission to assess the current status of Indigenous media and communications and identify further developments.

*Digital Dreaming* outlines the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in community radio, print and multimedia as well as in video and film production and it emphasises the importance of these media in providing a service to the Indigenous and wider community.

The review aimed to identify factors affecting the provision of effective media and communications services to Indigenous people and found that:

- Issues of self-determination, cultural respect and indirect racial discrimination are central in assessing the provision of adequate services to Indigenous communities.
- The involvement of Indigenous people in the development of projects, and at all levels of the production and decision-making process, is important to their success
- Adequate resources and training, including in management and marketing, should be accessible to Indigenous media groups and individuals
- Increased interaction between Government agencies, service providers and Indigenous people is crucial for the provision of adequate services.
- Increased co-ordination and strategic planning at the local and national levels.

### **ACMA, 2020. Trends in viewing and listening behaviour: ACMA consumer survey 2020**

This quantitative consumer research was undertaken to further understand trends in consumer take-up and usage of communications and media services. The Social Research Centre (SRC) was commissioned by the ACMA to conduct the survey using their probability-based panel, Life in Australia. 2,009 surveys were completed from 9 to 21 June 2020, and the results are representative of the Australian population aged 18 years and over. Key findings covered data on Australian adult's media consumption and content, including what Australians are watching, streaming and online subscription services, what Australians are listening to, music streaming services and podcasts, and the radio. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people were not represented in this data.

### **ACMA, 2021, 'Spending by subscription video on demand providers 2019-20', <https://www.acma.gov.au/spending-subscription-video-demand-providers-2019-20>**

The ACMA published aggregated Australian content results for the 2019-2020 financial year for subscription video on demand services. This was the first time that such data had been collected and published in Australia.

**All Together Now, 2021, When inclusion means exclusion: Social commentary and Indigenous agency**, <https://alltogethernow.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/When-inclusion-means-exclusion-report-2021.pdf>

All Together Now's report when inclusion means exclusion is an inquiry into social commentary that inclusively portrays Indigenous people and communities in Australian mainstream media. The findings indicate opinion articles that portray Indigenous people inclusively through content and language still deny agency to Indigenous people and communities in their discussion and portrayal of Indigenous people and their issues.

All Together Now (ATN) monitors the mainstream media for racialised commentary and analyses opinion articles and current affairs television segments using a framework designed in collaboration with the University of Technology Sydney. Through this framework, the team looks at the content of race-related opinion pieces to determine whether they involve a negative, neutral or inclusive depiction of race. The conceptual framework draws on five key concepts: agency, sources, point of view, consideration of historical and cultural context, and the use of language. From 2018 to 2020, ATN collected and analysed 724 race-related opinion pieces and found that 53% of these involved negative depictions of race. All Together Now also analysed 20 opinion articles published between 2019 and 2020 in five leading newspapers: The Sydney Morning Herald, The Australian, The Daily Telegraph, Herald Sun and The Courier Mail, and found that Indigenous voices, points of view and sources are routinely under-represented, while the relevant historical and cultural context is regularly overlooked. Adding to that, the over-representation of non-Indigenous elite voices in media that cover Indigenous issues helps continue a paternalistic and disempowering attitude towards Indigenous people in Australia. The report recommends:

1. Mainstream media agencies need to have a diversity of Indigenous voices at all levels, and both empower and trust Indigenous people to do the work.
2. Non-Indigenous media and commentators need to seek out and listen to Indigenous voices, especially when discussing Indigenous matters.
3. Non-Indigenous media should engage with Indigenous-run media. This can improve how non-Indigenous media receives and engages with Indigenous stories.
4. Mainstream media needs to recognise its historic role in shaping racist and deficit-based discourses and representations of Indigenous people and seek to actively address its own past and ongoing racist practices.
5. Mainstream media needs to commit to the inclusion of Indigenous people and perspectives when reporting on Indigenous issues and concerns, and more generally across reporting.

**Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2020, General Social Survey, Available:**  
<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/general-social-survey-summary-results-australia/2020>

The 2020 General Social Survey (GSS) was conducted over a 4 month period from 15th June to 5th September 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey was

collected online or via telephone interviewing only. There was no face-to-face interviewing conducted in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions. Because of this changed methodology and the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on the Australian population, care should be exercised when making comparisons with 2019. The GSS includes questions on "cultural tolerance and discrimination" and trust. It found:

- Generally, people agreed that it is 'a good thing for a society to be made up of people from different cultures' (85%)
- In 2020, 13% of Australians experienced some form of discrimination in the previous 12 months
- More than three quarters (76%) of Australians agreed that the healthcare system can be trusted in 2020 (Table 1).
- Three in five (61%) Australians agree that most people can be trusted. Persons aged 70 years and over were more likely to agree that most people can be trusted compared to persons aged 15 to 24 years (68% and 54%) (Table 2).
- Four in five (79%) Australians agree that police can be trusted, while 63% agree that the justice system can be trusted.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are not represented in this data.

**Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2016, *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) 2014-2015*,  
<https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@nsf/mf/4714.0>**

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) was conducted from September 2014 to June 2015 with a sample of 11,178 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in private dwellings across Australia. The NATSISS is a six-yearly multidimensional social survey which provides broad, self-reported information across key areas of social interest for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, primarily at the national level and by remoteness.

**Australian Government, 2017, 'More than radio - a community asset: Social Return on Investment analyses of Indigenous Broadcasting Services', *SVU Consulting***

In 2017 there were over 120 Australian Government funded Indigenous Broadcasting Services (IBSs) operating in Australia, with further unfunded IBS transmission sites. These vary in size from very small remote services to large community radio broadcasting services, and together, they reach an estimated audience of at least 100,000 Indigenous listeners who listen regularly. At the time the most substantial investment in Indigenous broadcasting is provided by the Culture and Capability Programme under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) which is administered by the Department of the Prime and Minister and Cabinet (PM&C).

This project forecast the return on investment over three years of a very remote, regional and urban Indigenous Broadcasting Service (IBS) by understanding, estimating and valuing their impact on stakeholders. The analysis was verified through broader sector consultation to inform the Australian Government about the breadth and depth of impact likely to occur as a result of their continued investment in IBSs.

This analysis provides a useful foundation for monitoring the future impact of IBSs. It identifies outcomes and a theory of how impact is achieved. It also includes indicators and proxies that could inform appropriate measures. Those outcomes and



measures constitute a theory, which should first be tested more broadly with the sector.

Key insights from the project were:

1. IBSs provide much more than radio – they are community assets that contribute to strengthening culture, community development and the local economy.
2. The outcome achieved by IBSs appear consistent but the activities they undertake are varied.
3. The activities IBSs undertake are tailored to the specific needs of the community which helps build trust amongst the community.
4. IBSs are achieving a range of social returns on investment, heavily informed by their context, and value flows to a variety of stakeholder groups.
5. IBSs are contributing towards more of the Government's priorities than is currently realised.
6. IBSs can leverage government funds to generate additional revenue - and greater impact - but only if they have sufficient resourcing available

### **Australian Government, 2022, 'Media Policy Statement: Green Paper Response and Next Steps', Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications**

This policy statement published by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communication presents the Government's response to the media reform green paper, which has raised a number of important issues about how Australian's access television content in the contemporary media environment. This statement outlines the Government's response to the green paper under three 'themes':

Theme 1: developing the pathway to modernise Australia's television market

Theme 2: supporting Australian content across devices and platforms

Theme 3: enhancing regional news services

### **Australian Government; Australian National University, AIATSIS, 2020, National Indigenous Languages Report, Commonwealth of Australia**

This Report supports what Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have consistently asserted about the importance of language; speaking language provides cultural, social and economic benefits to individuals, communities and the nation. Drawing on research and analysis conducted by the Australian National University (ANU), the Report further identifies a wide range of language-based employment opportunities, such as translating and interpreting, teaching, arts and culture, broadcasting, tourism, and land and sea management. Given the demonstrated benefits of speaking language, and the widely acknowledged benefits of employment, capitalising on these opportunities should be a priority for governments at all levels.

This Report is different from past reports about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. For the first time, research specialists have come together to review the breadth of evidence regarding the benefits of speaking language (which have long been understood by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people).

To date, data collection on Indigenous languages has for the most part had to fit with collection methods that are not designed with or by Aboriginal and Torres Strait



Islander people (with the exception of the National Indigenous Languages Surveys). Data collection also has not taken into account that languages may still be a strong part of cultural identity, whether or not they are still spoken. The way some data is collected may not reflect the full relationship Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have with language.

In relation to broadcasting, the report found:

- The Indigenous broadcasting industry showcases the rich diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, languages and talent.
- National Indigenous Television (NITV) now reaches over two million unique views per month.
- Some of the content is delivered using an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language, while other programs showcase Indigenous languages.
- Wherever local talent is engaged in local media for local audiences, local ways of speaking are used.
- Radio 4MW in the Torres Strait. For example, estimates that 80 per cent of broadcast time is in Yumplatok (Torres Strait Creole).
- Encouraging the use of traditional languages in the mass media such as in popular music, music, television bolsters language maintenance, especially if that content becomes internationally popular.
- Many of Australia's famous media exports of Indigenous culture are in strong languages such as Yolgnu Matha, and Western Desert.
- Local broadcasting delivered in local languages creates an ongoing vehicle for everyday language use

**Commonwealth of Australia, 2014, *Media consumption and communication preferences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander audiences, 3 reports*, Department of Finance** <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/advertising/indigenous-audience-research>

This research explored: usage of Indigenous and mainstream media channels; (television, radio, print, online and social media); computer and mobile phone use; information seeking behaviour and preferences for receiving information from government; and English and Indigenous language proficiency.

The research involved a survey of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples aged 15 years and over across metropolitan, inner and outer regional areas in all Australian states and territories (excluding the ACT). Data was collected through 1,000 face-to-face interviews, conducted by a field force of Indigenous interviewers. Further insights were gained through qualitative research involving 187 people – 94 of whom resided in remote locations.

Overall, the research findings indicated that Indigenous audiences, like other groups in the community, comprise a wide range of people with different communication needs, preferences and expectations from government. The research indicated that most Indigenous audiences were more likely to wait to receive government information than to seek it out. This was primarily driven by the widespread expectation that government agencies had a duty of care to proactively notify citizens of their entitlements and changes which affected them.

**Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBAA), 2021, Community Radio Listener Survey, <https://www.cbaa.org.au/broadcasters/get-data-national-listener-survey-station-census/national-listener-survey-fact-sheets>**

The Community Radio Listener Survey is a survey of the community radio listening habits of Australians. It is a hybrid telephone and online survey of a representative sample of 16,000 Australians over the age of 15, across all Australian states and territories and is conducted on behalf of the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBAA) by McNair, an accredited Australian market and social research organisation with a long history of media research dating back to the first radio audience surveys held in the 1930s.

The surveys provide valuable feedback to community stations and stakeholders about trends, listeners, and the sector itself.

The Community Radio Listener Survey replaces the CBAA's National Listener Survey as the sector's leading data source. The new survey has an expanded reach – surveying more markets to include Greater Newcastle, Greater Wollongong, Orange/Bathurst, Greater Tamworth, Greater Wagga Wagga, Greater Townsville, and the Central Coast.

The survey reports will be available in July and December each year. The latest survey in July shows from a total market population of 20,620,000 people aged 15+, 24% or over 5 million are community radio listeners. Community radio listeners have an average listening time of 14 hours per week.

**First Nations Media Australia, 2020, Submission from First Nations Media Australia (December 2020) to the Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications on Media Diversity in Australia**

The submission notes that First Nations media organisations are the primary providers of First Nations news and current affairs to their communities and are the key providers of mainstream news and current affairs to their communities in forms that are appropriate and relevant. The role that First Nations media organisations perform in the delivery of essential information cannot be overestimated. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander broadcasters translate and relay key information in languages that are accessible to communities around the country every day.

**Fogarty, W., Bulloch, H., McDonnell, S. & Davis, M. 2018, Deficit Discourse and Indigenous Health: How narrative framings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are reproduced in policy, The Lowitja Institute, Melbourne.**

This report explores 'deficit discourse' in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health policy. 'Discourse', in this context, encompasses thought represented in written and spoken communication and/or expressed through practices. The term draws attention to the circulation of ideas, the processes by which these ideas shape conceptual and material realities, and the power inequalities that contribute to and result from these processes. 'Deficit discourse' refers to discourse that represents people or groups in terms of deficiency – absence, lack or failure. It particularly denotes discourse that narrowly situates responsibility for problems with the affected individuals or communities, overlooking the larger socio-economic structures in which they are embedded. Understanding how deficit discourses are produced and

reproduced is essential to challenging them. Thus, this report examines various aspects of deficit discourse in policy, but in particular considers deficit metrics: the ways in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians are homogenised and statistically compared to non-Indigenous Australians.

This report notes that media and political discourses often operate in tandem, reproducing negative discourses about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. McCallum and Waller (2012), for example, found that between 1988 and 2008, Australia's news media paid little attention to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy issues generally, unless they were controversial.

### **Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 1991, *Racist Violence: Report of the National Inquiry into Racist Violence*, Australian Government Publishing Service: Canberra**

The National Inquiry into Racist Violence was initiated by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission follow the representations to it about an apparent increase in the incidence of racially motivated violence in Australia.

The evidence presented to the Inquiry demonstrated that a range of factors of serious concern to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in relation to the media, including significant evidence of discriminatory reporting and racial stereotyping. It was argued that the effects of such presentations provided a legitimisation of coercive and violent measures against Aboriginal people.

Recommendation 46: That the media strive for more balance in the reporting of race related issues and avoid sensationalist coverage of these issues.

Recommendation 47: That the media avoid the unwarranted introduction of race or ethnicity into a story, and particularly the unnecessary use of ethnic-specific labels in reporting on suspected or convicted criminals.

Recommendation 48: That media organisations establish clear policies or guidelines for the reporting of incidents of racist violence which encourage sensitivity to the potential impact of such reporting.

Recommendations 59: That media organisations develop and implement policies to encourage the recruitment and advancement of Aboriginal and non-English speaking journalists within the industry.

### **IPSOS Global Advisor, 2019, 'Trust in the Media', *Global Media Trust***

This study was conducted via online survey between January 25 and February 8, 2019, in 27 countries around the world, via the Ipsos Online Panel system in Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, and the United States. Its key findings include:

- People across 27 countries are divided on whether they trust traditional media (magazines and newspapers, TV and radio). These sources are equally trusted as they are distrusted.
- Levels of trust in media sources vary greatly at the country level and proximity to people matters. People are most trusting of other people they know personally. Furthermore, personal relationships are the only source of news

and information that is perceived to have gained in trustworthiness over the past five years.

**Johnston, E; 1991, *Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody: National Report, 5 vols, Australian Government Publishing Service: Canberra***

The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (The Royal Commission) addresses the media in Chapters 12 and 28, noting the media as being a place where Aboriginal people experience discrimination in access and presentation and a space in which the voice of Aboriginal people is noticeably absent. The media is the principal source of information for the public and is generally considered central to forming, or at least influencing, public opinion. The Royal Commission also notes the historical role of the media, as an institution that has relegated and excluded Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The Royal Commission recommended funding for Aboriginal media organisations in recognition of the importance of their function. Additionally, the Royal Commission recommended that all media organisations be encouraged to develop codes and policies relating to the presentation of Aboriginal issues, establish monitoring bodies and put in place training and employment programs for Aboriginal employees. In light of the general disappointment Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia have expressed in their portrayal by the media, the media industry should encourage formal and informal contact with Aboriginal organisations, including Aboriginal media organisations.

**Journalists for Human Rights (JHR), 2016, 'Buried Voice: Changing Tones. An Examination of Media Coverage of Indigenous Issues in Ontario - Media Monitoring Report 2013-2016, 2016, Canada**

In September 2013, JHR released its inaugural Buried Voices study, which examined media coverage of Indigenous issues in Ontario between 2010 and 2013. It found Indigenous people were seven times less represented in media than what should proportionally reflect the population. The investigation was broken down into three periods:

- June 1, 2013 – May 31, 2014
- June 1, 2014 – May 31, 2015
- June 1, 2015 – March 31, 2016

The study investigated 319 print and online news outlets in Ontario for all mentions of keywords that would indicate Indigenous story coverage, including: Indigenous, Aboriginal, First Nation(s), Northern Ontario Reserves, Metis and Inuit.

In addition to tracking the actual number of Indigenous stories in each period, tonality of each story was analyzed to determine how journalists are portraying these issues. Further, prominent themes or "spikes" were identified to provide qualitative evidence of the types of stories being told.

**Featherstone, D; Thomas, J; Holcombe-James, I; Ormond-Parker, L; Kennedy, J; Ganley, L; unpublished, *Mapping Digital Inclusion and Media Use for Informed Decision Making in Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities*, RMIT**

The project involves working with 10-12 remote First Nations communities to develop local digital inclusion plans and measuring the change in levels of digital inclusion and media use within the community over a four-year period (2021-2024). Potential research sites will be identified based on criteria to ensure a diverse national sample, and selected communities will be offered the option of being involved in the project.

The research team will work closely with local and regional agencies to ensure the project adheres to local policies and cultural protocols, community trust and engagement, and to ensure the research addresses local needs and provides benefit to the community. We will work with local co-researchers on all community-based research as well as analysis of results.

The project aims to:

- (1) generate a detailed account of the distribution of digital inclusion and the uses of digital services including news and media across Indigenous communities
- (2) track changes in measures of digital inclusion for these communities over time, as well as a national survey to provide context to case study sites;
- (3) inform the development and evaluation of appropriate local strategies for improving digital inclusion capabilities and services enabling informed decision making in remote Indigenous communities.
- (4) Provide evidence to inform policy and program resourcing by government and industry aimed at closing the gap on digital inclusion for First Nations people and communities.

The project is ongoing with results expected post-2024.

**McCallum, K; Meadows, M; Waller, L; Dunne Breen, M; 2012, 'The media and Indigenous policy: how news media reporting and mediatized practice impact on Indigenous policy', *News and Media Research Centre***

The Media and Indigenous Policy report is presented as a series of essays addressing the outcomes of six independent but interlinked research projects. Each paper addresses a different research question in a particular policy field, utilising a range of qualitative research methods. Together, these essays shed light on the complex relationships between Australia's new media and the development of Indigenous social policies.

This research concludes that the way Indigenous issues are portrayed in mainstream news media does impact on the way Indigenous affairs policies are developed, communicated and implemented.

**McDowell, L; 2018, 'Making media together: Experiences of Aboriginal participation within co-creative remote media production teams', *Journal of Alternative and Community Media*, vol.3, pp.33-48**

This article outlines the findings of a research project that examined how participation can be understood, and subsequently improved, within collaborative, co-creative media practices at Pintubi Anmatjere Warlpiri Media and Communications (PAW Media), a remote Indigenous media organisation (RIMO) based in Yuendumu. By means of 13 in-depth interviews, grounded in participant observation, the project examined how Aboriginal participation was motivated,



enabled and limited from the perspectives of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal collaborators.

The study revealed practices of Aboriginal participation at PAW Media that were highly valued by participants; nonetheless, limits to participation were noted and two conflicting views regarding improved practice expressed. Non-Aboriginal facilitators supported a transition towards greater Aboriginal autonomy over production, involving a handover of tasks and responsibility to their local Aboriginal counterparts; however, most Aboriginal media producers indicated that their participation was currently better served within a refined version of the existing co-creative structure.

### **McNair Ingenuity research: 2016, 'Remote Indigenous Communications and Media Survey', report prepared for Indigenous Remote Communications Association**

The 2016 Remote Indigenous Communications and Media Survey was conducted by McNair Ingenuity Research in partnership with the Indigenous Remote Communications Association (IRCA) and was funded by the Community Broadcasting Foundation with further funding provided by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet by means of an Indigenous Advancement Strategy grant in the category of Culture and Capability.

The Indigenous media survey was conducted by two different methods: In metropolitan and regional areas and some remote areas, the survey was conducted amongst the SurveyMob panel, a national panel of Indigenous Australians who opted in to being contacted for research. The results of this component of the research are available through the Department of The Prime Minister and Cabinet.

In remote communities, 218 face-to-face interviews were conducted across the Northern Territory, Queensland, Western Australia, and South Australia by members of the local communities or nearby communities. The interviewing was spread across 10 different communities. These interviewers were recruited by the Indigenous Remote Communications Association and trained by McNair Ingenuity Research – either in person or by teleconference.

### **Meadows, M; Forde, S; Ewart, J; Foxwell K; 2007, 'Community Media Matters: An audience study of the Australian community broadcasting sector', Griffith University**

This report presents the results of the first national qualitative research study into Australian community broadcasting audiences. It explores why a significant and increasing number of Australians listen to community radio and/or watch community television, what they value about it, and how it meets their needs.

The data was collected from a series of audience focus groups, interviews with individual listeners/viewers and station managers, and representatives of community groups accessing community radio and television.

The report concludes that the community broadcasting sector in Australia is fulfilling four broad functions:

- Providing alternative sources of local news and information;
- Offering diverse audiences diverse music program formats and styles;
- Enabling community members to 'connect' — either socially or by engaging with radio programming — thus 'creating communities'; and

- It more accurately represents Australian social and cultural diversity than other media outlets.

### **Media Diversity Australia, 2020, Who Gets to Tell Australian Stories? Putting the spotlight on cultural and linguistic diversity in television news and current affairs**

The Who Gets To Tell Australian Stories? report is the first comprehensive picture of who tells, frames and produces stories in Australian television news and current affairs. It details the experience and the extent of inclusion and representation of culturally diverse news and current affairs presenters, commentators and reporters. It is also the first forensic examination of how media treats cultural diversity at the workplace level.

Television is a visual medium – one that literally shows us who we are and represents us as people and a nation. News and current affairs purports to identify and tell key stories about issues of importance to all Australians. Yet, this report shows, those stories have been reported, selected and produced by an overwhelmingly Anglo-Celtic workforce.

Who Gets To Tell Australian Stories? presents data and perspectives on cultural diversity in Australian free-to-air news and current affairs television. It establishes a baseline for future comparison. It offers a rationale for why cultural diversity matters on both economic and social levels and makes recommendations on how networks can improve their cultural diversity.

The report is based on three data sets (a program sampling analysis, survey of television journalists and a desktop analysis of publically available information on the cultural background of editorial leaders in television newsrooms and network boards) and a series of qualitative interviews.

Australian television news and current affairs media does not represent all Australians, and this affects the way stories are told and framed. It has been almost three decades since the 1991 National Inquiry into Racist Violence by the then Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission raised concerns about the lack of diversity in the media leading to inadequate representation of significant sections of the Australian public. The Inquiry recommended media organisations develop and implement policies to encourage the recruitment and advancement of Indigenous and non-English speaking journalists within the industry, noting that the employment of more people from Aboriginal and non-English speaking backgrounds in the media industry generally would help to sensitise the media to issues of concern to these groups and contribute to more informed and more realistic reporting.

### **Nairn, R; McCreanor, T; Moewaka Barnes, A; 2017, 'Mass media representations of indigenous peoples: MURF report', SHORE & Whariki Research Centre, Massey University NZ**

The intention of this review is the stimulate international discussions and collaborations among the many scholars who have seen the importance of mass media representations to the ongoing colonisation of Indigenous peoples.

This study has sought to emphasise the importance and influence of mass media representations on the status and experience of Indigenous peoples in



Anglocolonised territories. Using a conventional literature review method to identify issues raised in research published between 2000 and 2015 on the topic of media representations of Indigenous peoples in such colonised nations, this study has conducted comparison and synthesis.

**Orima, 2021, *First Nations Omnibus Survey*, <https://orima.com.au/>**

The First Nations Omnibus survey is a regular survey of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults across Australia. The survey is designed to provide robust, affordable and ethical survey data to Government and other not-for-profit organisations. It allows clients to take advantage of existing sample and survey setup and only pay for the questions they want to ask. ORIMA, through the First Nations Omnibus, surveys 300 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, at least twice a year.

Data is collected by ORIMA's community interviewers, a team of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and men who conduct interviews in their local communities. The geographic dispersion of the survey spans metropolitan, regional and remote areas across Australia and ensures proportional geographic representation.

**Productivity Commission, 2000, 'Broadcasting Inquiry Report', Report No.11, *Commonwealth of Australia***

The Productivity Commission through this report, sought to advise on practical courses of action to improve competition, efficiency and the interests of consumers in broadcasting services. This report reviews the structure and regulation of broadcasting in Australia, including the Indigenous broadcasting sector and Indigenous broadcasters.

The report recommends that the Government examine the need for, and feasibility of, establishing an Indigenous broadcasting service, including:

- who should provide the service;
- how the service should be provided;
- the additional government resources required; and
- a timetable for implementation.

**Reconciliation Australia, 2020, *Australian Reconciliation Barometer 2020*. <https://www.reconciliation.org.au/publication/australian-reconciliation-barometer-2020/>**

The Australian Reconciliation Barometer (ARB) is a biennial national research study that looks at the relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians, and how perceptions affect progress towards reconciliation. It has been conducted By Reconciliation Australia since 2008.

The ARB measures attitudes towards reconciliation, using the five dimensions of reconciliation—race relations, equality and equity, unity, institutional integrity, and historical acceptance—to inform data collection and analysis.

The 2020 ARB surveyed a national sample of 495 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and 1988 general community members, across all states and territories.

Both the general community sample and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sample are weighted to be representative in terms of age group, gender and location (state and territory populations), as per Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census data. The Australian Reconciliation Barometer has been used in various government publications for reporting, and monitoring purposes including various Productivity Commission Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage reports.

Media Insights from the Australian Reconciliation Barometer 2016 show few Australians (10%) think the stories they hear about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the media portray them positively, yet a large portion of Australians rely on the media as their main source of information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This situation creates major barriers for reconciliation, resulting in fewer people who believe the relationship is important, and contributing to a misunderstanding about the causes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage.

In 2016, more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians (57%) believe the media portrays them negatively, compared to 2014 (45%) and twice as many Australians say the media is their main source of information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (34%), compared to those who say school education or other research is their main source (16%).

Australians who rely on the media as their main source of information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are less likely to view the relationship as important (44%), compared to those who rely on school education or other research as their main source (59%).

### **Task Force on Aboriginal and Islander Broadcasting and Communications, 1984, *Out of the Silent Land*, Australian Government Publishing Services: Canberra**

*Out of the Silent Land* was the first Commonwealth attempt to address the lack of broadcasting services in rural and remote Indigenous communities. In 1987, based on the recommendations from the Task Force, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs developed a program to deliver radio and television services to remote communities – the Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme (BRACS). The scheme was designed to give remote communities access to radio and television services delivered by satellite. It also enabled communities to gain control of the retransmission of satellite signals, and to broadcast their own programs for local reception.

### **Thomas, J, Barraket, J, Wilson, CK, Holcombe-James, I, Kennedy, J, Rennie, E, Ewing, S, MacDonald, T, 2020, *Measuring Australia's Digital Divide: The Australian Digital Inclusion Index 2020*, RMIT and Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne, for Telstra.**

The Australian Digital Inclusion Index (ADII) was first published in 2016, providing the most comprehensive picture of Australia's online participation to date. The ADII measures three key dimensions of digital inclusion: Access, Affordability, and Digital Ability. It shows how these dimensions change over time, according to people's social and economic circumstances, as well as across geographic locations, over a seven-year period from 2014 to 2020.

This latest ADII report incorporates data collected up to March 2020 and so does not fully reflect the effects of the pandemic on Australians' digital inclusion. The report provides a detailed view of the level and distribution of digital inclusion across the country at a time before the pandemic's impacts were fully felt and case studies extend this analysis by exploring the impact of COVID-19 on some of the specific groups most impacted.

The report found that Indigenous Australians living in urban and regional areas have a relatively low level of digital inclusion, with a 2020 ADII score of 55.1 (7.9 points below the national score). In the past year the ADII score for Indigenous Australians remained unchanged. The digital inclusion gap between Indigenous Australians and other Australians is evident across all three dimensions.

The ADII data collection does not extend to remote Indigenous communities, where high levels of geographic isolation and socioeconomic disadvantage pose distinct challenges for digital inclusion. In 2018 and 2019, ADII case studies were conducted in the remote indigenous communities of Ali Curung in the NT and Pormpuraaw in far north Queensland. Findings from these studies suggest that digital inclusion for Indigenous Australians further diminishes with remoteness, particularly in terms of Access and Affordability.

The ADII highlights that more research is needed to better understand the level and nature of digital inequality experienced by Indigenous Australians.

**United Nations, 2008, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, United Nations**

Article 16.1: Indigenous peoples have the right to establish their own media in their own languages and to have access to all forms of non-Indigenous media without discrimination.

Article 16.2: States shall take effective measures to ensure that State-owned media duly reflect Indigenous cultural diversity. States, without prejudice to ensuring full freedom of expression, should encourage privately owned media to adequately reflect Indigenous cultural diversity.

**Wilding, D; Giotis, C; Koskie, T; 2020, *News in Australia: diversity and localism – Review of literature and research*, University of Technology, Sydney: NSW**

The *News in Australia: diversity and localism series*, was produced as part of Australian Communications and Media Authority's (ACMA) broader 2019-2020 work program exploring Australia's new environment.

The ACMA announced in April 2019 that news would be one of its compliance priorities in 2019–20. The ACMA undertook a work program to determine whether current community safeguards were delivering news and journalistic content that meets community expectations and supports an open, pluralistic democracy in Australia. It is focused on four key issues in relation to news: commercialisation, impartiality, diversity and localism.

As part of the ACMA research program 2019–20, the Centre for Media Transition (CMT) was commissioned to conduct a review of literature and research to provide

a comprehensive understanding at that point in time of the media environment in relation to those four key issues.