

## INDUSTRY FORUM 4

### GROWING FIRST NATIONS NEWS AND CURRENT AFFAIRS

**Facilitator:** Chelsea Bond, UQ



#### **Panelists/Contributors:**

- Chris Graham, NIRS
- Gilmore Johnston, CAAMA
- Naomi Moran, Koori Mail
- Danny Teece-Johnson, NITV News

#### **Summary:**

How do we build our news and current affairs capacity across the industry, develop a network of community journalists, share news content, and provide locally relevant news services?

#### **Purpose/ Aims:**

- To increase the sector's capacity for creating and sharing First Nations news and current affairs from all parts of the country
- To provide audiences with locally relevant news services
- To build the skills, tools and employment model for a network of community journalists to share stories from across the country over various platforms/services
- To promote a cooperative approach among existing national news services (NIRS, NITV, Koori Mail, CAAMA, etc) while maintaining autonomy and business models

## Structure/ Questions:

- Chair to introduce panellists
- Opening question for each: What is the significance of First Nation News and Current Affairs – why is it important?
- Q2: What do we currently do well? What's worked well either collectively or within your own institutions or industries, whether print, radio, television?
- Q3: In terms of the theme of today's panel of "growing" First Nations News & Current Affairs in an under-resourced environment, where do you think our efforts are best directed in terms of the gaps and why (networking, content sharing, capacity building, protocols and guidelines, etc)
- Q4: Digital technology has reshaped mainstream news and current affairs quite dramatically - requiring new and adaptive business models. For Indigenous issues however, social media has been useful politically giving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples access to an audience it was denied through mainstream media and has seen the emergence of players such as IndigenousX and online news commentators/writers/bloggers/activists. What has been the response from First Nations News and Current Affairs in navigating this changing environment, and what do you see as the opportunities that could be harnessed?

## Notes of Discussion:

Chelsea Bond (facilitator):

- Why does First Nations news matter?

Naomi Moran, Koori Mail:

- Wayne Wharton said "Black media is the ammunition against assimilation". That really resonated for me.
- Our first story was about racism and it's still a key topic in Koori mail

Chelsea: Is it our role to report or transform?

Naomi:

- Both, depending on whose story we tell at any one time

Danny Teece-Johnson, NITV:

- When I was young I hated the way we were misrepresented
- NITV News is important to tell our side of the story
- We need a strong voice at NITV and across the country, in all our communities

Chelsea:

- I became an academic because the stories were wrong, we need to challenge it
- But we're still unsure how to describe ourselves

Danny:

- We have to correct the other media, but also focus on the solutions our communities are finding for themselves, they're the stories that need telling
- That way we can educate the broader public, this is how our mob are fixing the issues in their communities

Gilmore Johnson, CAAMA:

- At CAAMA, we look for an alternative view to mainstream media
- The Sunrise program story worried me, mainstream media are biased
- The Tennant Creek story- mainstream media blew it out of proportion
- We spoke to the local communities, Warren H Williams is now based in Tennant Creek as local broadcaster to tell local stories, Barkly region is often left out

Chris:

- The role of Indigenous media is about correction
- Tennant Creek is the moral panic story, done by ABC
- Some people say Indigenous media tells the positive stories
- But we also do the harder stories, NIRS will put historical context to a story

Chelsea:

- Providing context is critical to our content
- What are you most proud of?

Chris:

- We've done a lot of good memes on Tony Abbott

Chelsea:

- What about the NIT expose on Lateline story?

Chris:

- That story revealed the ABC fiction about the Mutitjulu story
- It was the worst journalism I've seen in 30 years of journalism

Naomi:

- Blessed to have gone from 14 year old at Koori Mail to General Manager
- Story on Don Dale- we had reported on that story two years earlier
- This wasn't new news – we had told that story, but 4 Corners got the credit
- If you want to know about blackfellas, watch black TV or radio or read black news
- We need to be more present around the country, get more content from around the country

Danny:

- I love what we do for Survival Day each year, has helped put Change the Date on the agenda
- When WA govt said they would close communities I went up and spent time in Kimberley communities; we stemmed the tide and stopped the WA govt pushing people off their lands again
- Got a lot of support from Goolarri Media

Gilmore:

- Interviewing our own people- the trust and respect for elders
- I practiced with Mum and Dad to learn about interviewing elders
- You get good stories once you've got trust

Chelsea:

- When I was young, I used to write letters to Koori Mail before social media.
- We're now seeing the emergence of players such as IndigenousX and online news commentators/ writers/ bloggers/ activists. Black women turned the Sunrise story around by mid-day through online blogs and social media.
- Now commentary is passing as news content- what do you think about that?
- How is First Nations News and Current Affairs navigating this changing environment, and what do you see as the opportunities that could be harnessed?

Naomi:

- It's the biggest challenge we face as a self-funded newspaper. We have to engage audiences through social media and online, but have to protect our newspaper space.
- We want to see how the bloggers can contribute to Koori Mail on social media.
- We still have a print focus for now
- We will launch a new website in April with more editorial space

Chelsea:

- News rooms look very different now

Naomi:

- Adam from NITV has asked to partner with Koori Mail

Pauline Clague (in audience):

- I was part of team that did Kiroba (sp?) at NITV, with Malandirri McCarthy and Goolarri Media
- We stopped the other media from creating havoc, we have to stop those stories

Chris:

- Sunrise knew what they were doing- they used a PR person and a shock jock
- They got the outcomes they wanted, lots of discussion, large audience and influence social policy

Pauline:

- How can we control those stories, prevent them getting airplay?

Chelsea:

- Who is your audience? How does that determine your approach?

Gilmore:

- We're in Alice Springs, but also reach other remote communities
- We have to break down the stories for our audience, make the stories accessible

- I'm worried about the talent pool for Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander journalists

Chris:

- We have to respond to that stuff, put another perspective
- 6 weeks of ABC stories delivered you the Intervention
- The real threat isn't Sunrise, it's Fairfax and the ABC who are taken seriously by policymakers

Lola Forester (in audience):

- Cold Justice on NITV is an award winning series- Alan Clarke is a great investigative journalist

**Panelist Bios:****Chris Graham, NIRS**

Chris Graham is the Acting General Manager of the National Indigenous Radio Service. He is also the publisher and editor of New Matilda, and the former founding managing editor of the National Indigenous Times and Tracker magazine. Chris has won a Walkley Award, a Walkley High Commendation and two Human Rights Awards for his reporting. He lives in Brisbane and splits his time between Stradbroke Island and the mainland.

**Gilmore Johnston, CAAMA**

Gilmore Johnston is originally from Cairns Queensland, now living in Alice Springs. He is a proud Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander from the Wulgurukaba, Western Yalanji, Girramay, Gunganji nations of north Queensland with connection to Erub and Boigu Island in the Torres Strait. Gilmore has worked in the Indigenous and Community media sector since 2000, both in radio broadcasting and working in and being a director within peak Indigenous bodies. He was recently appointed as station manager of CAAMA radio and its remote indigenous broadcasting services (RIBS) network. His career has included many challenging and exciting experiences, and he looks forward to continuing this journey of learning & sharing in his new role.

**Naomi Moran, General Manager, Koori Mail**

Naomi Moran is a Bundjalung woman from the Nyangbal and Arakwal nations of northern NSW. With 20 years experience working in black media including print, television and radio, she was appointed General Manager of the Koori Mail – Australia's only national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander print newspaper in 2016. Naomi continues to lead the organisation into its 27th year as an Aboriginal-owned and run business, and guides a dedicated team in delivering the latest news on Indigenous issues and community storytelling from around the nation each fortnight.

**Danny Teece- Johnson, Journalist/Producer, NITV:**

A Gomeri man from Moree NSW, Danny has been studying and working in film for nearly 15 years. Danny studied Documentary at Metro Screen Sydney and has been awarded two film scholarships as a result of his passion for social change storytelling. Danny has also produced broadcast works for ABC, SBS, BBC 4 and the Foxtel Network and was the Northern Territory Correspondent for 5 years with NITV. He is currently the Output Producer for NITV News & Current Affairs team, looking after a team of Aboriginal journalists reporting right around Australia.

