

Pearls and Irritations



Have your say: Senate inquiry into media diversity in Australia

By [JOHN MENADUE](#) |

On [18 November 2020](#)

After more than 500,000 people signed a petition launched by former prime minister Kevin Rudd raising concerns about the influence of Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, the Senate is to hold an inquiry into media diversity.



Credit – Unsplash

Last week, on 11 November, 2020, Sarah Hanson-Young moved a motion in the Senate to establish the inquiry, which is expected to scrutinise local media companies and how Google and Facebook have changed the way people access news. The motion was not opposed and passed without a vote.

The Senate referred the inquiry into the state of media diversity, independence and reliability in Australia to the Senate Environment and Communications References Committee for report by 31 March 2021.

The inquiry's terms of reference are:

The state of media diversity, independence and reliability in Australia and the impact that this has on public interest journalism and democracy, including:

- (a) the current state of public interest journalism in Australia and any barriers to Australian voters' ability to access reliable, accurate and independent news;
- (b) the effect of media concentration on democracy in Australia;
- (c) the impact of Australia's media ownership laws on media concentration in Australia;
- (d) the impact of significant changes to media business models since the advent of online news and the barriers to viability and profitability of public interest news services;
- (e) the impact of online global platforms such as Facebook, Google and Twitter on the media industry and sharing of news in Australia;
- (f) the barriers faced by small, independent and community news outlets in Australia;
- (g) the role that a newswire service plays in supporting diverse public interest journalism in Australia;
- (h) the state of local, regional and rural media outlets in Australia;
- (i) the role of government in supporting a viable and diverse public interest journalism sector in Australia; and
- (j) any other related matters.

The closing date for submissions is 11 December 2020.

How to make a submission

If you require any special arrangements to enable you to participate in the Committee's inquiry, please contact the Committee Secretariat. Further information regarding accessibility can be found at www.aph.gov.au/Help/Accessibility

Preparing a submission to an inquiry

The contact for the Committee Secretariat is:

Committee Secretary

Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications

PO Box 6100

Parliament House

Canberra ACT 2600

Phone: +61 2 6277 3526

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For more information

- [Media Releases](#)
- [Government Response](#)
- [Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications](#)
- [Committee home page](#)

Pearls and Irritations will be making a submission. We encourage all our supporters and readers to also consider making submissions. Please note the closing date is 11 December.



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John Menadue is the publisher of Pearls & Irritations. He has had a distinguished career both in the private sector and in the Public Service.

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