

# Review of the News Media and Digital Platforms Mandatory Bargaining Code

Submission to The Treasury

May 2022

[Public  
Interest  
Journalism  
Initiative]

The Public Interest Journalism Initiative (PIJI) welcomes the opportunity to make this submission to Treasury regarding the News Media and Digital Platforms Mandatory Bargaining Code Review.

PIJI strongly supports a better understanding of news production and availability across all regions of Australia. Our interest lies in the health – and long term sustainability – of public interest journalism and the public benefit that it generates for all.

PIJI is platform-neutral and size-neutral with respect to news media production. With no commercial interests, our activities focus on optimal fiscal and regulatory measures that will support a diverse news marketplace and enable news media to innovate, grow and serve in its role as a public good for the Australian community.

This submission focuses on key issues and findings from PIJI's research of direct relevance to this review – our [Australian Newsroom Mapping Project](#) (ANMP). This project is being delivered in progressive stages<sup>1</sup> and has multiple components and diagnostic tools such as the recently-released [Australian News Index](#) (ANI). The ANMP continues to produce instrumental data for policy makers, industry and the community, capturing baselines of local news production, tracking changes in news production and availability and providing a public register of new productions across all media formats.

We would be pleased to expand on PIJI's research and would welcome an opportunity to brief Treasury on upcoming news mapping work including the next scheduled release: broadcast news production.

In preparing the following comments, PIJI has been guided by key principles that inform all our work: to act in the public interest; to ensure plurality of news production and neutrality of support; to be independent, practical and evidence-based in consideration of any options.

Our submission is structured as follows:

- Section 1 comprises general comment and recommendations
- Section 2 provides changes in news production since March 2022
- Section 3 covers commercial deals
- Section 4 covers news businesses without reported deals
- Section 5 examines the registration of news businesses
- Section 6 cover unintended consequences
- Appendix A provides further information about the Australian Newsroom Mapping Project
- Appendix B provides detail of news outlets not included in ACCC list of commercial deals
- Appendix C provides more information about PIJI

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<sup>1</sup> A comprehensive baseline of radio and television news producers by local government area is currently in development.

## 1 General comments

For public interest journalism to survive and thrive in Australia, we need a robust news media sector that boasts a diversity and plurality of players of all sizes and types – large and small, retail and wholesale, metro and regional, commercial, not-for-profit and public service, existing businesses and start-ups.

PIJI looks for policy intervention to produce a clear public benefit in public interest journalism outcomes and to ensure plurality of news production and neutrality of support.

The News Media and Digital Platforms Mandatory Bargaining Code (NMBC) is globally significant in its intentions and ambitions but in essence seeks to address a market power imbalance.

In the broadest terms, the presence of the Code has resulted in substantial new investment in a sector facing material decline (see [Australian Newsroom Mapping Project, report, March 2022](#)). However, deals have been made under the shadow of the NMBC not the legislation itself, and therefore, not all eligible news producers have secured deals. Instead, digital platforms can elect which news media to negotiate with, as seen by Facebook's lack of engagement with SBS, one of the most trusted news sources and producers of public interest journalism. Equally, there is no requirement for news media businesses to invest revenue in journalism (although we note businesses such as The Guardian and ABC that have made public commitments to that effect).

Furthermore, while the Code remains without a designated digital platform, most of its terms lie dormant and therefore, untested.

With our clear focus on news as a public good, PIJI looks for transparency and public reporting of benefits resulting from government intervention – direct or indirect – in news media.

At a time when credible public interest news has never been more important, it is critical that the Code does not create any declines in media diversity nor decreases in the supply of public interest journalism to the Australian public.

Taking the above into account, PIJI makes the following observations on the commercial deals to date and considerations/ implications for the Code's review.

### 1.1 Increasing transparency and accountability

To assist the underlying public good and benefit to the community, the Code should wherever possible look to increase transparency and accountability from all actors: digital platforms, news media businesses and government.

#### The role of data

Core industry data is a key tool to assessing the Code's operation and effectiveness.

By nature of current deal direction, market information asymmetry persists in favour of the two dominant, digital platforms in Australia: Google is privy to 20 of the 34 total deals reported (58%), and Meta the remaining 14 (42%). While collective bargaining assists with information sharing among registered participants, such as the collective negotiations of Country Press Australia members, the use of non-disclosure agreements by the digital platforms prevents broader market knowledge.

PIJI welcomes this review's commitment to gathering data and its invitation to the digital platforms to share deal data. PIJI recommends that data be publicly reported and used to build an aggregate picture of public benefit.

Similarly, PIJI notes the relative low levels of registration with ACMA by news businesses also limits the amount of available data. To this extent, PIJI, in this submission, has focussed on providing new data in and around the news businesses and news outlets.

#### **Recommendation:**

- ***The NMBC Review includes all available data in its final report and that the report be made publicly available.***

### Guidelines and review cycle

As noted, no digital platform has been designated under the Government's legislation. However at no time has the Government been clear on the criteria by which platforms will be judged to have acted sufficiently to avoid such designation. The absence of this criteria has resulted in uncertainty for the sector, and a piecemeal ad hoc approach to the extent and nature of deals entered into.

Meanwhile the news media market continues to transform. The global context of this legislation has led other countries such as Canada, the US and UK to contemplate the introduction of similar style regulation, which if implemented, will increase commercial pressures on the digital platforms. Meta and Google's dominant market positions in Australia may also shift as other digital platforms such as TikTok grow.

With this likelihood of changing market conditions and assuming no designation is made before the Australian deals expire, the Code's litmus test will be the levels of Australian deal renewal in two years' time.

Greater transparency on the criteria by which platforms will be assessed is needed to better inform all players in the market now and into the future. PIJI supports the development of clear guidelines to accompany the Code. These guidelines should outline the financial and non-financial measures to be taken into consideration by the Minister, in determining a digital platform's designation under the Code (or not).

The establishment of guidelines would assist the Code to remain fit for purpose as a public policy intervention, and specifically:

- Provide an opportunity for industry and general public input on optimal parameters that support the Code's underlying objective of sustaining public interest journalism<sup>2</sup>  
eg. broad financial and non-financial metrics may encompass audience diversity including non-English speaking; aggregate investment and deal direction; investment horizons; news format, scale and geographical coverage; volume of registered news businesses and outlets among others.
- Provide greater transparency and accountability around the public benefit
- Provide greater transparency and accountability for the digital platforms, news businesses and government around any decision to designate a digital platform.

To ensure the Code can evolve and remain, we suggest that the Code be reviewed every two years after this initial review is completed. In the event, a digital platform is designated under the Code, a review of the legislation and its outcomes should be held 12 months from the effective date of designation.

#### **Recommendations:**

- ***Government establish a clear set of guidelines including financial and non-financial measures to be considered in determining the designation of a platform under the Code***
- ***The Code be reviewed every two (2) years after the initial review is completed***
- ***In the event a digital platform is designated, the Code be reviewed 12 months from date of designation, and then revert to the recommended two-year cycle.***

### Improving industry accountability

The Code also represents an opportunity for the news media industry to build greater trust with the general public through improved transparency and accountability in its provision of public interest journalism.

To this effect, in [PIJI's submissions during the Code's development](#), we advocated for the inclusion of all existing industry codes registered with ACMA in the Code's Professional Standards test. We also

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<sup>2</sup> Treasurer's press release, 25 February 2021.

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recommended that all registered news business be subject to the oversight of an external complaint process.

### **Recommendation/s:**

- ***The Professional Standards Test include all existing industry codes registered by ACMA under Part 9 of the Broadcasting Services Act 1992 (Cth).***
- ***The Professional Standards Test be amended so that registered news businesses are subject to the oversight of an external complaints process.***

While the introduction of Code has incentivised commercial deals for the industry, there is no obligation on recipient news media businesses to invest in public interest journalism; they could for instance, buy a new drama series or pay dividends to shareholders instead.

The introduction of a public interest journalism [tax rebate](#) alongside the Code would provide a simple policy solution to deliver transparent, public benefit. In essence, a focussed rebate would:

- incentivise direct investment in public interest journalism, thereby helping to sustain this public good across Australian communities including areas that may otherwise be financially unviable
- provide direct, measurable public benefit
- require news businesses to publicly report on outcomes through the ATO
- be applicable for all news businesses, including eligible news businesses not covered by deals.

This broad application of this policy is attractive as it can deliver benefit to supporting public interest journalism, with or without the Code.

[Conservative analysis](#) shows the potential for \$356m benefit per annum. Such a scheme has recently [been introduced](#) by the Canadian government and other jurisdictions are contemplating [following suit](#).

PIJI has [developed guidelines](#) including eligibility criteria to assist policymakers in devising such a scheme.

### **Recommendation/s:**

- ***The Government considers a R&D-style tax rebate as a complement to the Code to strengthen sustainable investment in public interest journalism and create transparent, public benefit.***

## 2 Changes in news production since March 2021

The reported \$200M of deals over the last 12 months, following the introduction of the NMBC is a welcome injection to the industry. It is hoped the majority of this uplift will flow as increased investment in public interest journalism.

The following data from PIJ's *Australian Newsroom Mapping Project* shows changes in news production since March 2021 when the News Media Bargaining Code was first legislated<sup>3</sup>.

Table 1 shows 45 expansions verses 75 contractions for the period 3 March 2021 – 31 March 2022, a net decrease of 30. Closer examination of the map's growth indicators reveal higher levels of activity in the most positive change types: 25 new mastheads, stations or websites and 11 new newsrooms and more modest gains in service increases (4) and new print editions (5). Comparatively, in the 12 months leading up to the Code, 87 news outlets were founded, 2 newsrooms opened, 5 publications increased their service and 9 began a new print edition.

Unsurprisingly given continuing COVID-19 induced economic uncertainty during this period, the data also captures 38 masthead or station closures and 24 decreases in service (e.g., frequency of publication or news bulletin or significantly reduced local content production). This is compared to 42 outlet closures over the previous year, an additional 7 mergers and 2 newsroom closures, 15 decreases in service. 94 publications shifted to digital by ending their print editions.

CHANGE CATEGORY	TOTAL
Expansions	45
Contractions	75
<b>NET CHANGE</b>	<b>(30)</b>

**Table 1:** Net change by change category, 3 March 2021 – 31 March 2022

CHANGE TYPE	TOTAL
New masthead, station or website	25
Newsroom opened	11
Increase in service	4
New print edition	5
Merger	7
End of print edition	6
Decrease in service	24
Newsroom closure	0
Masthead or station closure	38
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF RECORDS</b>	<b>120</b>

**Table 2:** Count of records by change type, 3 March 2021 – 31 March 2022.

<sup>3</sup> These data changes have two attributes: the **change type**, which describes the nature of the change, and the **change category**, which list the changes as either expansions or contractions in news production and availability.

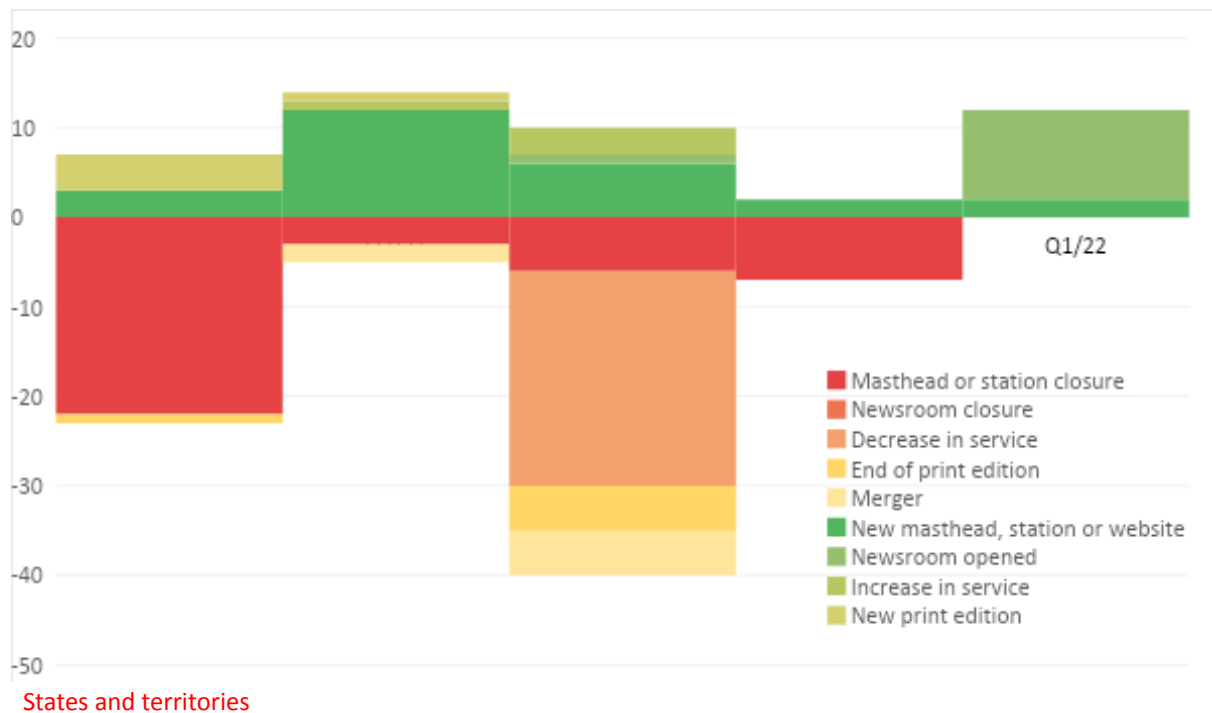
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It is expected the Code will have a long impact lag as different parties are still in negotiations or early stage implementation of their commercial deals. Recipient news businesses remain best placed for comment on individual uses of revenue from new commercial deals, such as the ABC's announcement regarding regional expansion.<sup>4</sup> PIJI will continue to add new data, track and report on news production changes overall.<sup>5</sup>

Some key events account for the large volume of changes since 3 March 2021 (see Figure 1):

- Q1/21: Australian Community Media seemed to retire nearly two dozen of its mastheads, closing their individual websites and social media presences.<sup>6</sup>
- Q3/21: Regional and metropolitan television reaffiliation came into effect, which resulted in the closure of a large number of WIN and Nine local news bulletins in Queensland and Victoria. A small expansion of news bulletins occurred in New South Wales. These records are tagged as 'Decrease in service' and 'Increase in service' respectively.<sup>7</sup>
- Also in Q3/21, we listed further Australian Community Media newspapers as 'Decrease in service' following reductions to the publishing schedule.<sup>8</sup>
- Q1/22: the large growth in 'Newsrooms opened' is a result of the ABC's significant expansion in regional areas, adding 55 new jobs, 10 new bureaux and 9 expanded bureaux as a direct result of revenues arising from their commercial deals.<sup>9</sup>

**Figure 1:** Change types by quarter, 31 March 2022 (Q1/21 data is limited to the period from 3 March)



<sup>4</sup> ABC 2022. Australia benefits from major expansion of regional and rural coverage. ABC. 10 March.

<<https://about.abc.net.au/press-releases/australia-benefits-from-major-expansion-of-regional-and-rural-coverage/>>

<sup>5</sup> PIJI is currently developing analysis of television and radio news data for release in 2022.

<sup>6</sup> Dickson G. 2021. Australian Newsroom Mapping Project Report: April 2021. Melbourne: Public Interest Journalism Initiative.

<<https://piji.com.au/research-and-inquiries/our-research/anmp/anmp-data/>>. pp. 2-3.

<sup>7</sup> Dickson G. 2021. Australian Newsroom Mapping Project Report: July 2021. Melbourne: Public Interest Journalism Initiative.

<<https://piji.com.au/research-and-inquiries/our-research/anmp/anmp-data/>>. p. 4.

<sup>8</sup> Dickson G. 2021. Australian Newsroom Mapping Project Report: September 2021. Melbourne: Public Interest Journalism Initiative.

<<https://piji.com.au/research-and-inquiries/our-research/anmp/anmp-data/>>. p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> ABC 2022. Australia benefits from major expansion of regional and rural coverage. ABC. 10 March.

<<https://about.abc.net.au/press-releases/australia-benefits-from-major-expansion-of-regional-and-rural-coverage/>>

Most changes occurred down the eastern seaboard (ie. Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria) with small amounts of activity in South Australia and Western Australia. No changes were observed in the Australian Capital Territory or Tasmania over the reporting period (see Figure 2).



Figure 2: Change types by state or territory, 3 March 2021 - 31 March 2022.

### Metropolitan and regional areas

Table 3 shows that regional and rural Australia experienced the greatest change, accounting for 89 per cent of all contractions and 62 per cent of growth compared to metropolitan areas.

CHANGE CATEGORY	Metropolitan		Regional / rural		Total #
	#	%	#	%	
Expansions	17	38	28	62	45
Contractions	8	11	67	89	75
<b>NET CHANGE</b>	9		(39)		(30)

Table 3: Absolute and percentage change by change category and region, 3 March 2021 - 31 March 2022.

The overwhelming majority of outlets that closed (97 per cent) or decreased their service (100 per cent) were in regional areas (Figure 3). Considerably more outlets closed (37) to those that opened (14) in regional/rural areas across the reporting period, while the capital cities gained five times more outlets than we identified as having closed (11 compared to 1): see Figure 3.



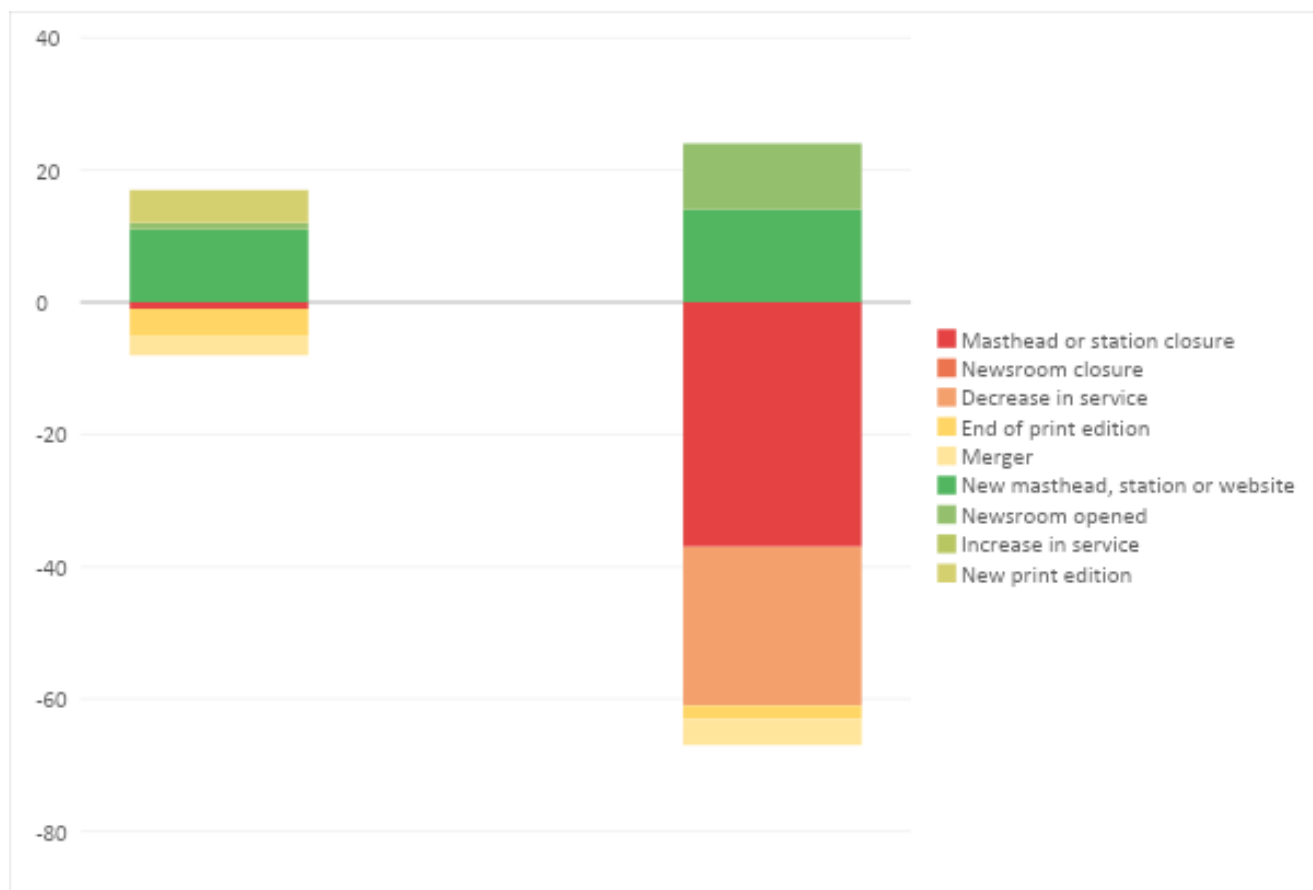


Figure 3: Change types by region, 3 March 2021 - 31 March 2022.

### 3 Commercial deals

According to ACCC estimates,<sup>10</sup> there are 34 commercial deals that have been struck over the past 12 months (see *Table 4*). Google has struck 20 deals and Meta 14. There are 12 deal entities in common, if Country Press Australia's collective bargaining arrangement is counted as a single entity.

PIJI will be adding radio and television news production into its data in the coming months. It must be noted, therefore, that the following analysis excludes broadcast data such as Meta's commercial deal with Network Ten and news broadcast outlets operated by the public broadcasters, Nine, Seven, News Corp, other commercial and community news businesses. As such this commentary refers to 33 of the 34 listed deals.

Additionally, it is difficult to quantify exactly how many businesses and outlets are covered by commercial deals due to a lack of deal transparency, for example:

- The relative value of the number of outlets is unclear in the commercial dealmaking, compared to other factors such as overall content output; throughput to search and social; and/or editorial expenditure;
- If outlets are a factor, it is unclear whether all outlets operated by a news business have been included in each deal or if deals apply only to a smaller subset.
- Some news businesses have launched new outlets since negotiating those deals, such as Australian Community Media's Inner East Review, and it is unclear whether those are included;
- Country Press Australia's collectively negotiated deals may not include all member newspapers, some of which do not have a digital presence. At least one publisher has indicated that the terms of the deals with Google and Facebook exclude his business from eligibility.<sup>11</sup>

According to [PIJI's Australian News Index](#), which currently records print and digital news production, there are 768 print and digital news outlets in Australia published by 394 news businesses.

The Index estimates that of these, there are up to 146 news businesses – representing up to 472 print and digital news outlets – that are covered across 33 of the deals (*Tables 5 and 6*).

As many as 287 news outlets have a deal with Google, while Meta has made deals covering up to 274 outlets.

An unclear number of businesses and outlets are covered by deals negotiated by Country Press Australia. PIJI data suggests CPA has 127 news business members publishing 191 outlets, however, not all may be eligible (or have elected to be eligible) for payments under the deal.

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<sup>10</sup> The Treasury 2022. Review of the News Media and Digital Platform Mandatory Bargaining Code: Consultation paper. April 2022. <[https://treasury.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-04/c2022-264356\\_0.pdf](https://treasury.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-04/c2022-264356_0.pdf)> p. 10.

<sup>11</sup> Matt Nicholls, publisher of the *Cape York Weekly*, wrote an open letter to CPA saying that his newspaper is ineligible to receive funding from Google and that owner-operator publications would all be excluded from the deal negotiated with Meta ([https://twitter.com/matt\\_nicholls/status/1491563065627840514](https://twitter.com/matt_nicholls/status/1491563065627840514))

DEAL ENTITY	GOOGLE AGREEMENT	META AGREEMENT	ACMA REGISTER	NOTES
Agenda Media	Yes	No	No	
Australian Associated Press	Yes	No	No	
Australian Broadcasting Corporation	Yes	Yes	No	
Australian Community Media	Yes	Yes	No	
Country Press Australia	Partial <sup>12</sup>	Partial <sup>12</sup>	Partial <sup>13</sup>	
Independent Australia	Yes	No	No	
Industry Super Holdings	Yes	Yes	No	
Junkee Media	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Mamamia	No	Yes	No	
News Corp	Yes	Yes	No	
Nine Entertainment	Yes	Yes	No	
Out Publications	Yes	No	Yes	
Private Media	Yes	Yes	No	
Schwartz Media	Yes	Yes	No	
Scott Trust	Yes	Yes	No	
Seven West	Yes	Yes	No	
Special Broadcasting Service	Yes	No	Yes	
Solstice Media	Yes	Yes	No	
The Conversation	Yes	No	Yes	
Times News Group	Yes	No <sup>14</sup>	No	
Yahoo!	Yes	No	No	Formerly Verizon Media.
<b>TOTAL (Affirmative)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>	

*Table 4: Reported commercial deals, excluding Meta's deal with Network Ten (Data: ACCC)*

<sup>12</sup> As noted, the CPA deals do not appear to cover all member newspapers.

<sup>13</sup> Two CPA members, Fassifern Guardian and Tribune and the Mareeba Express, are registered with the ACMA.

<sup>14</sup> Data provided by the ACCC for the Review Consultation Paper (April 2022) suggests (p. 10) that Times News Group has struck a deal with Google. Times News Group is also a member of Country Press Australia; so it may have a deal with Meta through that collective agreement, despite not having one separately.

PIJI's data does record the focus of each outlet's primary format: digital or print; and news scale: local, metropolitan, state/ territory or national (*Table 5*).

Of those news outlets with reported deals, 71% are print in primary format and 29% digital. In terms of news scale, the aggregate deals mainly support national news producers (5%) and local news producers (53%).

A summary analysis across all recorded print and digital news outlets show that total deals account for 61% of the market (*Table 6*).

	BUSINESS ENTITY	NEWS OUTLET	PRIMARY FORMAT		NEWS SCALE	
Business entities and outlets	#	#	#	%	#	%
Recorded	146	472				
<b>Primary format</b>						
Print			334	71%		
Digital			138	29%		
<b>News scale</b>						
National					24	5%
State or territory					4	1%
Metro					10	2%
Local					434	92%
<b>TOTAL</b>	146	472	472	100%	472	100%

*Table 5: Summary of print and digital news media businesses and outlets with reported commercial deals (Data: Australian News Index, May 2022)*

DEAL STATUS	BUSINESS ENTITY	NEWS OUTLET	
DEALS		#	%
With both platforms	137	457	60%
With Google only	8	14	2%
With Meta only	1	1	0%
<b>SUBTOTAL Deals</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>61%</b>
<b>WITHOUT DEALS</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>39%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>768</b>	<b>1</b>

*Table 6: Summary deal status by number of print and digital news business entities and outlets (Data: Australian News Index, May 2022)*

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Assessed by primary format, the aggregate deals show a natural skew to covering 70% of digital news producers, verses 58% of print news producers (*Table 7*).

DEAL STATUS	PRIMARY FORMAT			
	Print #	Print %	Digital #	Digital %
With both platforms	326	57%	131	66%
With Google only	8	1%	6	3%
With Meta only	0	0%	1	1%
<b>SUBTOTAL Deals</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>70%</b>
<b>WITHOUT DEALS</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>1</b>

*Table 7: Summary deal status by primary format: digital or print (Data: Australian News Index, May 2022)*

In broad terms, aggregate deals cover news scale at a national, state and metro level. At a local level, they cover 59% of the digital and print news outlets with the balance of 41% with no deals (*Table 8*).

DEAL STATUS	NEWS SCALE							
	Nation al#		State/territory #		Metro #		Local #	
With both platforms	16	67%	4	100%	10	100%	427	58%
With Google only	7	29%	0	0%	0	0%	7	1%
With Meta only	1	4%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>SUBTOTAL Deals</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>59%</b>
<b>WITHOUT DEALS</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>730</b>	<b>1</b>

*Table 8: Summary deal status by news scale (Data: Australian News Index, May 2022)*

On an individual news producer level, it is notable that Meta has chosen not to pursue discussions with SBS, one of the largest public interest journalism producers in the country. It is expected that the addition of PIJ's broadcast news data will magnify this omission given SBS's mandated public role as a non-English news broadcaster.

#### 4 News businesses without commercial deals

The [Australian News Index](#) shows an estimated 248 news businesses, accounting for 296 news outlets, which are not reported to have secured deals (see Table 7). Of this total, 237 business entities account for 285 news outlets while the business entities for 11 listed outlets remain under investigation.

Breaking down the 296 news outlets by primary format and news scale, there are 59 outlets that are digital in their primary format. 11 of these are listed as national news scale and the remaining 48 outlets at a local scale.

The balance of 237 outlets are all print in primary format. They are all local in news scale except for one metro-focussed outlet (*The Local Paper*, VIC).

	BUSINESS ENTITY #	NEWS OUTLET #	PRIMARY FORMAT #	NEWS SCALE #
<b>Business entities and outlets</b>				
Recorded	237	296		
Under investigation	11			
<b>Primary format</b>				
Print			237	
Digital			59	
<b>News scale</b>				
National				11
State or territory				0
Metro				1
Local				284
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>296</b>

**Table 7:** Summary of news media businesses without reported commercial deals  
(Data: Australian News Index, May 2022)

The addition of television and radio news data will increase the number of news businesses and outlets without reported deals, as evidenced by the absence of commercial and community radio businesses in the listed commercial deals.

## 5 Registration of news businesses

There is no obligation on news businesses to undertake the registration process while the Code is dormant, and a digital platform is willing to negotiate.

According to PIJI's data, of the documented 394 digital and print news business entities across Australia, 15 are registered with the ACMA<sup>15</sup>.

Of the 34 deals, five deals are with a registered digital or print news entity: Junkee Media has deals with both Google and Meta, and Google deals with Special Broadcasting Service Corporation, The Conversation Media Group Pty Ltd and Out Publication Ltd. It is unclear whether Stormvale Pty Ltd (publisher of the Fassifern Guardian and Tribune) and Portasea Pty Ltd (publisher of the Mareeba Express) are included in Country Press Australia's commercial deals.

Of the 248 news businesses without deals, 11 news businesses are registered with ACMA.

Based on these low registration levels, it would seem that news businesses have been incentivised to register, mainly as an attempt to activate negotiations with one or both digital platforms. PIJI understands that there are negotiations still underway with some of these players, however, so far it would seem that registration has provided muted returns for news businesses seeking deals with the digital platforms.

Some caveats apply to these observations, as different assessment standards are applied for inclusion in our data as compared to eligibility for registration as a news media business by the ACMA. Significant differences between the two definitions are identified in bold.

### *Australian Newsroom Mapping Project:*

Journalistic activities must be aimed at producing **original content** that is core news content: recording or investigating issues of public significance to Australians; issues relevant to engaging Australians in public debate and in informing democratic decision making; or content which relates to community and local events.

### *Australian Media and Communication Authority:*

Core news content means content that reports, investigates **or explains:**

(a) issues or events that are relevant in engaging Australians in public debate and in informing democratic decision-making; or

(b) current issues or events of public significance for Australians at a local, **regional or national level.**

It is likely that these differences will lead to a more expansive interpretation of core news content by the ACMA as compared to PIJI. Companies applying for registration are also able to nominate a single news source (such as a subsection of a website) for assessment against core news production standards; whereas PIJI assesses the entirety of the output of an outlet.

Eligibility for registration as a news media business also involves meeting a revenue test, currently set at \$150,000 per annum. PIJI does not have a revenue test for inclusion in its data.

Finally, as companies actively apply for registration, the ACMA has more access to information directly from the companies, and the ability to request further information if it is required for assessment. Our data is prepared independently, and though we actively seek clarification from a news media business where necessary, it is rare that these businesses participate in maintaining the data.

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<sup>15</sup> PIJI's core news business producer data includes Out Publications Pty Ltd, Polaris Media Trust, Stormvale Pty Ltd, Junkee Media Pty Ltd, Region Group Pty Ltd, Dailymail.com Australia Pty Ltd, Portasea Pty Ltd, Alt Media Pty Ltd, Croakey Health Media Limited, Special Broadcasting Service Corporation, Western Sydney Publishing Group, The Conversation Media Group Limited, Pro Bono Australia Pty Ltd, and Paton Family Trust. PIJI is yet to assess broadcast news producers.

## 6 Unintended consequences

The Code was developed through cycles of industry and public consultation to redress the competition imbalance between the digital platforms and news producers. However, without the designation of a digital platform, many of the Code's provisions are effectively inactive and therefore, built-in safeguards cannot be relied upon.

For example, under a dormant Code there is no compulsion for a digital platform to:

- negotiate in good faith with a registered news business:
  - demonstrated where a digital platform refuses to negotiate without explanation, eg. SBS and The Conversation among other registered businesses, have reportedly been unsuccessful in advancing discussions with Meta
- recognise and promote original news content, a key component to sustaining quality journalism
- meet Minimum Standards, e.g. algorithmic notification and data sharing
  - It is unclear whether current deals include related provisions
  - Regardless, these latent clauses afford no protection for news businesses without deals
- provide a standard offer to registered news businesses:
  - small, registered news businesses may have opted into this non-negotiation mechanism

### Market competition

While the presence of the Code has improved the competition imbalance between digital platforms and news media industry in the main, it has negatively impacted competition among news media businesses.

There is now an uneven playing field between those news businesses with increased financial capacity from deals, and those without: first level advantage for those with two deals and second level advantage for those with one deal, leaving those without any deals at a distinct, competitive disadvantage, mostly amongst the smaller news producers.

For one of the world's most consolidated media markets, this has created market inequity and is leading to unintended consequences such as in recruitment and staffing costs in a tight, labour market.



## Appendix A: About the Australian Newsroom Mapping Project

PIJI maps and monitors indicators of news production and availability through its [Australian Newsroom Mapping Project](#) (ANMP).

Through cumulative stages of data gathering and analysis, this project is building a valuable baseline of the country's news production against which supply fluctuations can be compared. Three stages of the project have launched so far:

- [Tracking changes in news production](#) (since 1 April 2020)
- [Local news producers](#) (since 7 December 2021)
- [Australian News Index](#) (since 13 May 2022)

This is data vital to understanding the current health of public interest journalism in Australia. It will assist in the examination of the changing nature of news production (television, radio, print and digital) in the COVID-19 era, media ownership and the influence of global trends on the Australian landscape.

The data provided is based on PIJI's observations of publicly available information and our methodology for categorising and recording changes. The project provides data from 1 January 2019 onwards.

Though we review and report on the data [each month](#), it is possible that some records are out-of-date, incorrect, or may not reflect the views of an outlet's publisher. Where errors or missing information are identified, we update the database and provide an update via the monthly report. We welcome any further information or corrections.

Please note that due to finite resources and significant methodological difficulty in ensuring rigour, this project does not capture journalism job gains and losses.

We do not presume to present a complete news production database, but we do believe that this is the most comprehensive record of its kind.

### Background

Preliminary work in this field was undertaken by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC)'s Digital Platforms Inquiry. In its 2019 report,<sup>16</sup> the ACCC found there were 21 local government areas (LGAs) in Australia, including 16 rural/regional, without any news production. Due to confidentiality agreements surrounding that data, the ACCC has never released a list of the affected LGAs. However, its data was only drawn from a dozen media companies, and was from the pre-COVID-19 era, which is therefore likely to be a) an incomplete picture, and b) given the volume of changes in the [ANMP](#), out-of-date.

A database of the broadcasting sector, arising from license requirements, is held by the industry regulator, Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA). That data is publicly available but is not presented with ease for the user in mind. Since the passage of the News Media Bargaining Code, the ACMA has an open register available for new media businesses, but the Code's eligibility criteria exclude some parts of community sector (ie. those not incorporated), start-ups and smaller commercial businesses.

Beyond government sources, other databases exist but are also out of date or incomplete. The Australian Business Register contains company records, but no information about the individual mastheads, stations and websites that one company might maintain. A database contained at 'newspapers.com.au' is restricted to print publications only and is out of date. Varying peak bodies, such as Country Press Australia or the Community Newspaper Association of Victoria have member records, but these are limited by nature and not publicly accessible.

Internationally, this project builds on the emerging area of research known as 'news ecosystems', which seek to understand the changing nature of news production and coverage within geographic

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<sup>16</sup> Australian Competition and Consumer Commission 2019. *Digital Platforms Inquiry*. p. 321.

boundaries, including the notion of a ‘news desert’. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill’s [News Deserts’ Research Project](#)<sup>17</sup> is the most high-profile example of this work. Other efforts are underway in New Jersey<sup>18</sup> and Canada<sup>19</sup>.

### Using the data

It is worth discussing some caveats around the *Australian Newsroom Mapping Project* to avoid misinterpretation of this data.

The first caveat is to acknowledge that the changes captured are broader than ‘closures’ and ‘openings’ of news outlets. ‘Contractions’ is not a synonym for ‘closures’; it is a broader category of negative changes to news production and availability. This report is updated regularly in order to demonstrate the difference.

The data is likely to be an undercount of the changes that have occurred. It is actively maintained by PIJI and contributions are received from news organisations, from civil society and academia, and from the public. Even then, we do not have visibility into all news production and availability around Australia, and we do not presume to have a complete log of all changes that have occurred over the past two years.

The way that data is recorded in the database also leads to undercounts in two subtly different ways: in changes that occur over time, and in multiple changes that occur simultaneously as part of one event. Each news publication is entered in the database only once, and only the most recent and most serious change type is represented. Where an event involves multiple change types it is logged as the highest ranked category to which it fits. This means that:

- If a news website was founded in January 2019; launched a print edition in April; closed that print edition in September and closed entirely by December, only the most serious (and, secondly, most recent) change – the ‘Masthead or station closure’ in December – would be recorded, despite the multiple other positive and negative changes to production and availability across the period.
- If the closure of a print newspaper was logged, the event would have necessarily involved the end of a print edition; a decrease in service and the closure of a newsroom, but it would be only logged as a ‘Masthead or station closure’, as that change type ranks highest on the hierarchy.

The change types that we collect, listed in terms of the hierarchy, are:

1. **Masthead or station closure / opening;** meaning an entire news outlet closing or opening. In most cases this means a publication within a larger organisation, but rarely it can mean a whole news company.
2. **Newsroom closure / opening;** meaning a news company removing or adding a base from which to conduct news production, that having an impact on its coverage area. This change type only captures instances where there is an assumed change to the amount of localised news production (such as AAP opening a new bureau in Darwin); it does not include an outlet moving into new premises without a probable reduction in content (for example, when The Age’s Melbourne CBD newsroom moved into Nine Entertainment’s Melbourne CBD studios).
3. **Decrease / increase in service;** meaning changes in the amount of content that is produced, or, rarely, the availability of that content. Most often this category has captured observable reductions in locally-relevant, original content, but it can also include the launch of a new access point for existing content (such as a new radio bulletin produced in partnership with the local newspaper, as in Harvey WA). It can include changes to print publication frequency, but does not include print distribution area changes.

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<sup>17</sup> Abernathy P 2020. *The expanding news desert*. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. <<https://www.usnewsdeserts.com/>>

<sup>18</sup> Stonbely et al. 2021. *Mapping local news ecosystems*. Center for Cooperative Media, Montclair State University, New Jersey. <<https://newsecosystems.org/>>

<sup>19</sup> Lindgren A. 2017. *Local news research project*. Ryerson University, Ontario. <<https://localnewsmap.geolive.ca/>>

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4. **End / start of print edition**; meaning changes in availability without a corresponding change in production. A newspaper that transitions to digital-only publication without reducing its coverage is an example.
5. **Merger**, meaning the coverage and/or content area of one news outlet being absorbed into another without a corresponding change in production. This change type is treated as a contraction but is the lowest level of concern.

The data also flattens the complexity of what is being gained and lost by not having any assessment of the output, institutional characteristics or content of the news companies: the closure of a newspaper with ten working journalists would be presented as equivalent to the opening of a website of one. Clearly these two events would have very different impacts on the production and availability of news, but it is beyond this project's scope to make this assessment for every change that occurs.

For these reasons caution must be taken in drawing conclusions about the general health of the news media ecosystem from only this project data.

Two further hypotheticals provide reasons for caution:

1. A news media ecosystem in which many news entrepreneurs had the confidence and the capital to establish organisations and outlets, the majority of which might fail, could be a healthy environment of public interest journalism production and competition but might appear in our data like a failing system due to the high number of closures.
2. A news media ecosystem in which all journalism was produced by a single company could be an uncompetitive environment or be failing to meet community need for diverse and locally relevant content, but would look healthy in our data if that one company was stable or growing.

Despite these caveats we do believe that the *Australian Newsroom Mapping Project* offers information that, in combination with other research, can provide insight into the changing nature of journalism production and availability in Australia.

## Appendix B: News outlets not included in ACCC list of commercial deals

The following table lists 296 news outlets capture in PIJI's [Australian News Index](#) that do not appear in the ACCC list of commercial deals between either (or both) Google and Meta and Australian-based news businesses<sup>20</sup>.

The table includes business entity details where known, the news title, primary format, news scale and the relevant local government areas of coverage. 11 titles are not yet specified as to their associated business entity.

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<sup>20</sup> See [Review of the News Media and Digital Platforms Mandatory Bargaining Code: Consultation paper](#), April 2002, p10

**PII: AUSTRALIAN NEWSROOM MAPPING PROJECT**  
**News outlets without commercial deals with digital platforms**  
**Data as at 31 March 2022**

BUSINESS ENTITY	NEWS OUTLET	PRIMARY FORMAT	STATE	NEWS SCALE	LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA	ACMA REGISTRATION	GOOGLE DEAL	META DEAL
Anthony Klan	The Klaxon	Digital	NSW	National		No	No	No
APN Educational Media	Campus Review	Digital	NSW	National		No	No	No
Atelier Puglisi Pty Ltd	6 News Australia	Digital	VIC	National		No	No	No
Business News Australia Pty Ltd	Business News Australia	Digital	NSW	National		No	No	No
Campus Morning Mail Pty Ltd	Campus Morning Mail	Digital	NSW	National		No	No	No
Crosley Health Media Ltd	Crosley	Digital	TAS	National		Yes	No	No
DMG Media	Daily Mail Australia	Digital	NSW	National		Yes	No	No
New Matilda Pty Ltd	New Matilda	Digital	QLD	National		No	No	No
The Polaris Media Trust	Australian Jewish News	Digital	NSW	National		Yes	No	No
The Spectator	The Spectator	Digital	NSW	National		No	No	No
Tribune International	Tribune International	Digital	NSW	National		No	No	No
A M Miller & D K Martindale	southbournet.com.au	Digital	NSW	Local	South Burnett Regional	No	No	No
Alt Media Pty Ltd	Bondi View	Digital	NSW	Local	Waverley Council	Yes	No	No
B I Barbi & J Pearce	Ingham Daily Press	Digital	QLD	Local	Hinchinbrook Shire	No	No	No
Bullengarook Bellows	Bullengarook Bellows	Digital	VIC	Local	Macedon Ranges Shire	No	No	No
Carol Altmann	The Terrier	Digital	VIC	Local	Warrambool City	No	No	No
Gatherine Watson	Bass Coast Post	Digital	VIC	Local	Bass Coast Shire	No	No	No
Clarence Media	Clarence Valley News	Digital	NSW	Local	Clarence Valley Council	No	No	No
Consult & Comply Pty Ltd	In the Cove	Digital	NSW	Local	Lane Cove Municipal Council	No	No	No
Coonamble Times	The Western Plains App	Digital	NSW	Local	Coonamble Shire Council	No	No	No
Damian Bester	New Norfolk and Derwent Valley News	Digital	TAS	Local	Derwent Valley Council	No	No	No
David Bosworth	Hawkesbury Post	Digital	NSW	Local	Hawkesbury City Council	No	No	No
Douglas News Network Pty Ltd	Douglas News Network	Digital	QLD	Local	Douglas Shire	No	No	No
Dunoon and District Gazette	Dunoon and District Gazette	Digital	NSW	Local	Lismore City Council	No	No	No
Flourieu App Pty Ltd	The Fleurieu App	Digital	SA	Local	City Of Victor Harbor	No	No	No
Genevieve Robey	Carindale Connect	Digital	QLD	Local	Brisbane City	No	No	No
Greenbushes Community Resource Centre	Greenbushes-Balingup Newsletter	Digital	WA	Local	Shire Of Bridgetown-Greenbushes	No	No	No
Greenwing Press Pty Ltd	Pittwater Online News	Digital	NSW	Local	Northern Beaches Council	No	No	No
Gregory Prior	Eastern Suburbs Life	Digital	NSW	Local	Woolahra Municipal Council	No	No	No
Greyden Enterprises Pty Ltd	Clarence Valley Independent	Digital	NSW	Local	Clarence Valley Council	No	No	No
Harcourt Progress Association Incorporated	The Core (Harcourt)	Digital	VIC	Local	Mount Alexander Shire	No	No	No
Henry Clarke	Country Caller	Digital	QLD	Local	Western Downs Regional	No	No	No
IndyNR Pty Ltd	The Indy	Digital	NSW	Local	Kyogle Council	No	No	No
Inner West Co Pty Ltd	Inner West Independent	Digital	NSW	Local	Inner West Council	No	No	No
Inness Pty Ltd	The Hunter App	Digital	NSW	Local	Muswellbrook Shire Council	No	No	No
Inness Pty Ltd	The Orange App	Digital	NSW	Local	Orange City Council	No	No	No
Janfont Holdings Pty Ltd	Magnetic Community News	Digital	QLD	Local	Toowoomba City	No	No	No
Kimberly Smee	Manly Observer	Digital	NSW	Local	Northern Beaches Council	No	No	No
Landsborough and District Community Newspaper Inc	Landsborough and District News	Digital	VIC	Local	Pyrenees Shire	No	No	No
Macquarie Publishing Pty Ltd	Canberra City News	Digital	ACT	Local	Australian Capital Territory	No	No	No
Margaret Mackay	Cooper Pedy Regional Times	Digital	SA	Local	The DC Of Cooper Pedy	No	No	No
Mark Alan Phillips	Brunswick Voice	Digital	VIC	Local	Moreland City	No	No	No
Murray Bridge News Pty Ltd	Murray Bridge News	Digital	SA	Local	The Rural City Of Murray Bridge	No	No	No
NSW Local App Company Pty Ltd	The Fort App	Digital	NSW	Local	Port Macquarie-Hastings Council	No	No	No
NT Independent Pty Ltd	NT Independent	Digital	NT	Local	Darwin Municipality	No	No	No
Region Group	About Regional	Digital	NSW	Local	Bega Valley Shire Council	Yes	No	No
Region Group	RiotACT	Digital	ACT	Local	Australian Capital Territory	Yes	No	No
Riddells Creek Neighbourhood House Inc	Riddell Roundup	Digital	VIC	Local	Macedon Ranges Shire	No	No	No
South Coast Beagle Pty Ltd	The Beagle	Digital	NSW	Local	Eurobodalla Shire Council	No	No	No
Southbeach Trust	Fremantle Shipping News	Digital	WA	Local	City Of Fremantle	No	No	No
Stadick Media Pty Ltd	Cootamundra Times	Digital	NSW	Local	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Cou	No	No	No
The Hot Tomato Broadcasting Company Pty Ltd	myGC.com.au	Digital	QLD	Local	Gold Coast City	No	No	No
The Law Family Trust	The Bugle	Digital	NSW	Local	The Council Of The Municipality Of Kia	No	No	No
The Media Trust	Sunshine Coast News	Digital	QLD	Local	Sunshine Coast Regional	No	No	No
Under investigation	Derwent Gully News	Digital	VIC	Local	Knox City	No	No	No
Under investigation	The District Bulletin	Digital	NSW	Local	Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council	No	No	No
Uniting Church of Australia - South Sydney	South Sydney Herald	Digital	NSW	Local	Council Of The City Of Sydney	No	No	No
Wangara Consulting	Dimboola Courier	Digital	VIC	Local	Hindmarsh Shire	No	No	No
Wavelength Group Pty Ltd	scone.com.au	Digital	NSW	Local	Upper Hunter Shire Council	No	No	No
Local Paper Pty Ltd	The Local Paper	Print	VIC	Metro		No	No	No
Alison Andrews	The Northern Midlands Courier	Print	TAS	Local	Northern Midlands Council	No	No	No
All Media Pty Ltd	City Hub Sydney	Print	NSW	Local	Council Of The City Of Sydney	Yes	No	No
Barbara Proudman	Tamborine Times	Print	QLD	Local	Scenic Rim Regional	No	No	No
Blair-Schneider Trust	Bridgetown Star	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of Bridgetown-Greenbushes	No	No	No
Blue Lake Media Services Pty Ltd	The SE Voice	Print	SA	Local	City Of Mount Gambier	No	No	No
Boronia and The Basin Community News Incorporated	Boronia and The Basin Community News	Print	VIC	Local	Knox City	No	No	No
Boypop Brook Community Resource Centre	The Boypop Gazette	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of Boypop Brook	No	No	No
Bridge Connection Inc.	Bridge Connection	Print	VIC	Local	Greater Bendigo City	No	No	No
Bridge Publishing	The Barham Bridge	Print	NSW	Local	Murray River Council	No	No	No
Bridport Innovations	BridReport	Print	TAS	Local	Dorset Council	No	No	No
Brookton Community Resource Centre	Brookton Telegraph	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of Brookton	No	No	No
Brown Hill	Brown Hill Community Newspaper	Print	VIC	Local	Ballarat City	No	No	No
Bruny Island Community Association	Bruny News	Print	TAS	Local	Kingborough Council	No	No	No
Butsdar Pty Ltd	Koorl Mail	Print	NSW	Local	Torres Shire	No	No	No
Buninyong and District Community Association Inc	Buninyong and District Community News	Print	VIC	Local	Ballarat City	No	No	No
Bunyip and District Newsletter Inc	Bunyip & District Community News	Print	VIC	Local	Cardinia Shire	No	No	No
Burwood Bulletin	Burwood Bulletin	Print	VIC	Local	Monash City	No	No	No
Bushland Shire Telegraph Pty Ltd	The Bush Tele	Print	NSW	Local	The Council Of The Shire Of Hornsby	No	No	No
Carisbrook Historical Society Inc	Carisbrook Mercury	Print	VIC	Local	Central Goldfields Shire	No	No	No
Carmel Christensen	The Rip (Queenscliff)	Print	VIC	Local	Queenscliff Borough	No	No	No
Central Coast Community Media	Grapevine News	Print	NSW	Local	Central Coast Council	No	No	No
Central Coast Newspapers	Coast Community Chronicle	Print	NSW	Local	Central Coast Council	No	No	No
Central Coast Newspapers	Coast Community News	Print	NSW	Local	Central Coast Council	No	No	No
Central Coast Newspapers	Pelican Post	Print	NSW	Local	Central Coast Council	No	No	No
Central West Media Pty Ltd	Central West Village Voice	Print	NSW	Local	Lithgow City Council	No	No	No
Chewton Domain Society	Chewton Chatt	Print	VIC	Local	Mount Alexander Shire	No	No	No
Churchill & District News	Churchill and District News	Print	VIC	Local	Latrobe City	No	No	No
Cloverdale Community Centre Inc	Northerly Aspects	Print	VIC	Local	Greater Geelong City	No	No	No
Cobar Weekly Association Incorporated	Cobar Weekly	Print	NSW	Local	Cobar Shire Council	No	No	No
Community Broadcast Network Pty Ltd	Blacktown News	Print	NSW	Local	Blacktown City Council	No	No	No
Community Technology Centre, Sussex Inlet	Sussex Inletter	Print	NSW	Local	Shoalhaven City Council	No	No	No
Community Voice Publications Limited	The Central Coast Voice	Print	TAS	Local	Central Coast Council	No	No	No
Cooroy Community Newspaper Inc	Cooroy Rag	Print	QLD	Local	Noosa Shire	No	No	No
Corporate Communications (Tas) Pty Ltd	Eastern Shore Sun	Print	TAS	Local	Clarence City Council	No	No	No
Corporate Communications (Tas) Pty Ltd	Glenorchy Gazette	Print	TAS	Local	Glenorchy City Council	No	No	No
Corporate Communications (Tas) Pty Ltd	Hobart Observer	Print	TAS	Local	Hobart City Council	No	No	No
Corrigin Community Resource Centre	The Windmill	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of Corrigin	No	No	No
Cosmos Media Pty Ltd	Westender	Print	QLD	Local	Griffith City Council	No	No	No
Craig William	Manlyborough Sun	Print	QLD	Local	Fraser Coast Regional	No	No	No
Creswick District News	Creswick District News	Print	VIC	Local	Hepburn Shire	No	No	No
Dargo and District Community Group	Dargo Bush Bulletin	Print	VIC	Local	Wellington Shire	No	No	No
Davies Brothers Pty Ltd	Derwent Valley Gazette	Print	TAS	Local	Derwent Valley Council	No	No	No
Dayboro Regional Information Network Inc	Dayboro Grapevine	Print	QLD	Local	Moreton Bay Regional	No	No	No
Deborah Jane Williamson-Gleich	Childers Chitchat	Print	QLD	Local	Bundaberg Regional	No	No	No
Decisive Publishing	North Sydney Sun	Print	NSW	Local	North Sydney Council	No	No	No
DI O'Sullivan & ME O'Sullivan	Hillston-Ivanhoe Spectator	Print	NSW	Local	Carriooth Shire Council	No	No	No
Don Dorrigo Gazette Pty Ltd	Don Dorrigo Gazette	Print	NSW	Local	Bellingen Shire Council	No	No	No
Donnybrook Community Resource Centre	Preston Press	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of Donnybrook-Balingup	No	No	No
Douglas G Begg Family Trust	The Kentish Voice	Print	TAS	Local	Kentish Council	No	No	No
Echo Publications	The Byron Shire Echo	Print	NSW	Local	Byron Shire Council	No	No	No
Elphinstone Progress Association	Elpho Info	Print	VIC	Local	Mount Alexander Shire	No	No	No
Emerald Community House	Emerald Messenger	Print	VIC	Local	Cardinia Shire	No	No	No
Esperance Media Interests Pty Ltd	Esperance Weekender	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of Esperance	No	No	No
Examiner Newspapers	Armada Examiner	Print	WA	Local	City Of Armada	No	No	No
Examiner Newspapers	Canning Examiner	Print	WA	Local	City Of Canning	No	No	No
Examiner Newspapers	Gosnells Examiner	Print	WA	Local	City Of Gosnells	No	No	No
Examiner Newspapers	Serpentine Jarrahdale Examiner	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of Serpentine-Jarrahdale	No	No	No
Flemington Kensington News Inc	Flemington Kensington News	Print	VIC	Local	Moonee Valley City	No	No	No
Flowerdale Community House Inc	Flowerdale Flyer	Print	VIC	Local	Murrindindi Shire	No	No	No
Font Publishing Pty Ltd	East Coast View	Print	TAS	Local	Glamoorgan-Spring Bay Council	No	No	No
Font Publishing Pty Ltd	King Island Courier	Print	TAS	Local	King Island Council	No	No	No
Font Publishing Pty Ltd	Tasman Gazette	Print	TAS	Local	Tasman Council	No	No	No
Font Publishing Pty Ltd	The Soerel Times	Print	VIC	Local	Sora Council	No	No	No
Fremantle Herald	Cockburn City Herald	Print	WA	Local	City Of Cockburn	No	No	No
Fremantle Herald	Fremantle Herald	Print	WA	Local	City Of Fremantle	No	No	No
Fremantle Herald	Melville City Herald North	Print	WA	Local	City Of Melville	No	No	No
Fremantle Herald	Melville City Herald South	Print	WA	Local	City Of Melville	No	No	No
Fremantle Herald	The Perth Voice	Print	WA	Local	City Of Perth	No	No	No
Garfield Spectator	Garfield Spectator	Print	VIC	Local	Cardinia Shire	No	No	No
Gill Family Trust	Denmark Bulletin	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of Denmark	No	No	No
Glenlyon Progress Association and Shire Hall	Glenlyon District News	Print	VIC	Local	Hepburn Shire	No	No	No
Gloprint Services & Printing Pty Ltd	Northern Rivers Talking Turkey	Print	NSW	Local	Kyogle Council	No	No	No

**PIII: AUSTRALIAN NEWSROOM MAPPING PROJECT**  
**News outlets without commercial deals with digital platforms**  
**Data as at 31 March 2022**

BUSINESS ENTITY	NEWS OUTLET	PRIMARY FORMAT	STATE	NEWS SCALE	LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA	ACMA REGISTRATION	GOOGLE DEAL	META DEAL
Gresford and District Community Group Inc	Gresford News	Print	NSW	Local	Dungog Shire Council	No	No	No
Haddon Community Learning Centre Inc	Woody Yalook Herald	Print	VIC	Local	Golden Plains Shire	No	No	No
Heartland Media	The Northern Rivers Times	Print	NSW	Local	Richmond Valley Council	No	No	No
Heyfield Community Resource Centre	Heyfield News	Print	VIC	Local	Wellington Shire	No	No	No
Hot Metal Publications	The Western Echo	Print	QLD	Local	Brisbane City	No	No	No
Howard & Co Discretionary Trust	Tweed Valley Weekly	Print	NSW	Local	Tweed Shire Council	No	No	No
Hyperlocal News Pty Ltd	CBD News	Print	VIC	Local	Melbourne City	No	No	No
Hyperlocal News Pty Ltd	Docklands News	Print	VIC	Local	Melbourne City	No	No	No
Hyperlocal News Pty Ltd	Inner City News	Print	VIC	Local	Melbourne City	No	No	No
Hyperlocal News Pty Ltd	North West City News	Print	VIC	Local	Melbourne City	No	No	No
Hyperlocal News Pty Ltd	Southern News	Print	VIC	Local	Melbourne City	No	No	No
Independent Community News Group	Eastside News	Print	VIC	Local	Boroondara City	No	No	No
Inverleigh Progress Association	Leigh News	Print	VIC	Local	Golden Plains Shire	No	No	No
Joanne Galgals	Canowindra Phoenix	Print	NSW	Local	Cabonne Shire Council	No	No	No
Julie-Ann Ryan	Blacktown City Independent	Print	NSW	Local	Blacktown City Council	No	No	No
Julie-Ann Ryan	Hawkesbury Independent	Print	NSW	Local	Hawkesbury City Council	No	No	No
Julie-Ann Ryan	Hills District Independent	Print	NSW	Local	The Hills Shire Council	No	No	No
Jurien Bay Community Resource Centre Inc	Lafayette Wingeacarrabee	Print	NSW	Local	Shire Of Dandragan	No	No	No
Kandos Rylstone Community Radio Inc	Community Capers	Print	NSW	Local	Mid-Western Regional Council	No	No	No
Kangaroo Valley Voice Incorporated	Kangaroo Valley Voice	Print	NSW	Local	Shoalhaven City Council	No	No	No
Kezkawin Enterprises Pty Ltd	Yarrabilba Bulletin	Print	QLD	Local	Logan City	No	No	No
King Media	Southern Highlands Express	Print	NSW	Local	Wingecarribee Shire Council	No	No	No
King Media Pty Ltd	Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Post	Print	NSW	Local	The Council Of The Shire Of Hornsby	No	No	No
King Media Pty Ltd	Lafayette Wingeacarrabee	Print	NSW	Local	Wingecarribee Shire Council	No	No	No
Korumburra Community Development and Action Inc	Burra Flyer	Print	VIC	Local	South Gippsland Shire	No	No	No
Kuranda Media Association Inc	Kuranda Paper	Print	QLD	Local	Mareeba Shire	No	No	No
Lake Grace Community Resource Centre	Lakes Link News	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of Lake Grace	No	No	No
Lancefield Neighbourhood House Inc	Lancefield Mercury	Print	VIC	Local	Macedon Ranges Shire	No	No	No
Leon Pezimenti	Glenferrie Times	Print	VIC	Local	Boroondara City	No	No	No
Lions Club of Hallidays Point	News of Our World	Print	NSW	Local	Mid-Coast Council	No	No	No
Local News Trust	Scenic News	Print	QLD	Local	Scenic Rim Regional	No	No	No
Loch Sport Community House	Loch Sport Link	Print	VIC	Local	East Gippsland Shire	No	No	No
Lorne Independent Inc	Lorne Independent	Print	VIC	Local	Surf Coast Shire	No	No	No
Lynwood Press	Mangrove Mountain & Districts Community I	Print	NSW	Local	Central Coast Council	No	No	No
M&S Print	Heart of the Hastings	Print	NSW	Local	Port Macquarie-Hastings Council	No	No	No
Market to Market Communications Pty Ltd	Community Leader (Manly)	Print	NSW	Local	Northern Beaches Council	No	No	No
Mary Valley Community News Association Inc	Mary Valley Voice	Print	QLD	Local	Sunshine Coast Regional	No	No	No
Mary Yule	Forster Fortnightly	Print	NSW	Local	Mid-Coast Council	No	No	No
Meredith Community Centre	Meredith and District News	Print	VIC	Local	Greater Geelong City	No	No	No
Mike Lowing	The Brantton Greta Vineyard News	Print	VIC	Local	Cessnock City Council	No	No	No
Mirboo North Times Newspaper Inc	Mirboo North Times	Print	NSW	Local	South Gippsland Shire	No	No	No
Momentum News Group Pty Ltd	Queenscliff Herald	Print	VIC	Local	Queenscliff Borough	No	No	No
Morawa Community Resource Centre	Morawa Scene	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of Morawa	No	No	No
Moreton Bay Region Industry and Tourism Limited	Dolphins News	Print	QLD	Local	Moreton Bay Regional	No	No	No
Mornington Peninsula News Group	Chelsea-Mordialloc-Mentone News	Print	VIC	Local	Kingston City	No	No	No
Mornington Peninsula News Group	Frankston Times	Print	VIC	Local	Frankston City	No	No	No
Mornington Peninsula News Group	Mornington News	Print	VIC	Local	Mornington Peninsula Shire	No	No	No
Mornington Peninsula News Group	Southern Peninsula News	Print	VIC	Local	Mornington Peninsula Shire	No	No	No
Mornington Peninsula News Group	Western Port News	Print	VIC	Local	Mornington Peninsula Shire	No	No	No
Mountain Monthly Co-operative Ltd	Mountain Monthly	Print	VIC	Local	Murrindindi Shire	No	No	No
Mullins Family Trust	Molong Express	Print	NSW	Local	Cabonne Shire Council	No	No	No
Murray River Business Group Pty Ltd	Red Gum Courier	Print	VIC	Local	Moir Shire	No	No	No
Myall Coast Communications Pty Ltd	Coffs Coast News of the Area	Print	NSW	Local	Coffs Harbour City Council	No	No	No
Myall Coast Communications Pty Ltd	Myall Coast News of the Area	Print	NSW	Local	Mid-Coast Council	No	No	No
Myall Coast Communications Pty Ltd	Nambucca Valley News of the Area	Print	NSW	Local	Nambucca Valley Council	No	No	No
Myall Coast Communications Pty Ltd	Port Macquarie News	Print	NSW	Local	Port Macquarie-Hastings Council	No	No	No
Myall Coast Communications Pty Ltd	Port Stephens News of the Area	Print	NSW	Local	Port Stephens Council	No	No	No
Naracoorte Community News Pty Ltd	Naracoorte Community News	Print	SA	Local	Naracoorte Lucindale Council	No	No	No
Narrandera Argus Pty Ltd	Narrandera Argus	Print	NSW	Local	Narrandera Shire Council	No	No	No
Nathan Quilty	Mchor Times	Print	VIC	Local	Greater Bendigo City	No	No	No
Natimuk and District Progress Association Inc	Natimuk Progress Press	Print	VIC	Local	Horsesham Rural City	No	No	No
Neerim District Progress Association	Neerim Star	Print	VIC	Local	Baw Baw Shire	No	No	No
Newdegate Community Resource Centre Inc	Gate Post	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of Lake Grace	No	No	No
Nimbin Aquarius Foundation Inc	Nimbin Good Times	Print	NSW	Local	Lismore City Council	No	No	No
Noofiti Pty Ltd	Roleystone Courier	Print	WA	Local	City Of Armadale	No	No	No
North Eastern Advertiser Investment Trust	North-Eastern Advertiser	Print	TAS	Local	Launceston City Council	No	No	No
North Western Courier Pty Ltd	Wide Bay News	Print	NSW	Local	Narrabri Shire Council	No	No	No
Northern Beaches Advocate Pty Ltd	Northern Beaches Advocate	Print	NSW	Local	Northern Beaches Council	No	No	No
Northern Valleys News Pty Ltd	Northern Valley News	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of Chittering	No	No	No
Outback Press (NSW) Pty Ltd	Coolah District Diary	Print	NSW	Local	Warrumbungle Shire Council	No	No	No
Outback Press (NSW) Pty Ltd	Dunedoo District Diary	Print	NSW	Local	Warrumbungle Shire Council	No	No	No
Outback Press (NSW) Pty Ltd	Merrima District Diary	Print	NSW	Local	Upper Hunter Shire Council	No	No	No
Ozone Press Pty Ltd	The Local Bulletin	Print	QLD	Local	Brisbane City	No	No	No
Paton Family Trust	Galston Glenorie & Hills Rural News	Print	NSW	Local	The Council Of The Shire Of Hornsby	YES	No	No
Paton Family Trust	Hills to Hawkesbury Community News	Print	NSW	Local	Hawkesbury City Council	YES	No	No
Paul Jelfs	Yankalilla Regional News	Print	SA	Local	The Dc Of Yankalilla	No	No	No
Pemberton Community Resource Centre Inc	Pemberton Community News	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of Manjimup	No	No	No
Peninsula's Own News Service	Peninsula Community Access News	Print	NSW	Local	Central Coast Council	No	No	No
Peoples News Pty Ltd	Peoples News	Print	QLD	Local	Mackay Regional	No	No	No
Pingelly Community Resource Centre	Pingelly Times	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of Pingelly	No	No	No
Pomona & District Community House Inc	Coorooa Connect	Print	QLD	Local	Noosa Shire	No	No	No
POST Newspapers	The POST	Print	WA	Local	City Of Subiaco	No	No	No
Pyramid Hill Neighbourhood House	Pyramid Hill	Print	VIC	Local	Loddon Shire	No	No	No
Quairading Community Resource Centre Inc	Banksia Bulletin	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of Quairading	No	No	No
Quirindi Printing & Publishing PTY LTD	Quirindi Advocate	Print	NSW	Local	Liverpool Plains Shire Council	No	No	No
Revenshorpe Community Resource Centre	Community Spirit	Print	VIC	Local	Shire Of Renshorpe	No	No	No
Robin Tennant-Wood	Braidwood's Changing Times	Print	NSW	Local	Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council	No	No	No
Rotary Club of Woodend Inc	The New Woodend Star	Print	VIC	Local	Macedon Ranges Shire	No	No	No
Roundbox Media Pty Ltd	Griffith Phoenix	Print	NSW	Local	Griffith City Council	No	No	No
Roundbox Media Pty Ltd	Hawkesbury Phoenix	Print	NSW	Local	Hawkesbury City Council	No	No	No
Roundbox Media Pty Ltd	Hilltops Phoenix	Print	NSW	Local	Hilltops Council	No	No	No
Roundbox Media Pty Ltd	Yass Phoenix	Print	NSW	Local	Yass Valley Council	No	No	No
Rowville Lysterfield Community News Inc	Rowville-Lysterfield Community News	Print	VIC	Local	Knox City	No	No	No
Samford & Districts Progress & Protection Association In	Village Pump	Print	QLD	Local	Moreton Bay Regional	No	No	No
Samuel J & Roger Burford	Along the Grapevine	Print	SA	Local	Adelaide Hills Council	No	No	No
Sharon Baxter-Judge	Regional Independent	Print	NSW	Local	Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council	No	No	No
Small Newspaper Company Pty Ltd	The Stanthorpe Record	Print	QLD	Local	Southern Downs Regional	No	No	No
South Gippsland Voices Newspaper Pty Ltd	South Gippsland Voices	Print	VIC	Local	South Gippsland Shire	No	No	No
South West Newspaper Company	South West Newspaper Company	Print	QLD	Local	Paroo Shire	No	No	No
Southern Business Services Pty Ltd	The Cygnet & Channel Classifieds	Print	TAS	Local	Huon Valley Council	No	No	No
Southern Business Services Pty Ltd	The Kingston Classifieds	Print	TAS	Local	Kingborough Council	No	No	No
Southern Cross Community Resource Centre	Crossroads	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of Yilgarn	No	No	No
Stratford Town Crier Inc	Stratford Town Crier	Print	VIC	Local	Wellington Shire	No	No	No
Studfield Wantima Community News Inc	Studfield Wantima Community News	Print	VIC	Local	Knox City	No	No	No
Sunbury & Cobaw Community Health Service Inc	Kyneton Connect	Print	VIC	Local	Macedon Ranges Shire	No	No	No
Sunshine Valley Gazette	Sunshine Valley Gazette	Print	QLD	Local	Sunshine Coast Regional	No	No	No
Sydney Community Services	The Village Observer	Print	NSW	Local	Lane Cove Municipal Council	No	No	No
Tambellup Community Resource Centre	Topics	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of Broomehill-Tambellup	No	No	No
Taradale Community Forum Inc	Taradale Talk	Print	VIC	Local	Mount Alexander Shire	No	No	No
Tatura Area Community Bulletin Committee Inc	Tatura Bulletin	Print	VIC	Local	Greater Shepparton City	No	No	No
The Senny Alliance	Berry Town Crier	Print	NSW	Local	Shoalhaven City Council	No	No	No
The Blackwood Times	The Blackwood Times	Print	SA	Local	City Of Mitcham	No	No	No
The Manning Community News Pty Ltd	The Manning Community News	Print	NSW	Local	Mid-Coast Council	No	No	No
The Midland Kalamunda Echo Unit Trust	Echo News	Print	WA	Local	City Of Swan	No	No	No
The Romsley Rag	Romsley Rag	Print	VIC	Local	Macedon Ranges Shire	No	No	No
The Toodyay Herald Inc	The Toodyay Herald	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of Toodyay	No	No	No
The Triangle Incorporated	The Triangle (Bermagui)	Print	NSW	Local	Bega Valley Shire Council	No	No	No
The Word Bureau	2508 District News	Print	NSW	Local	Wollongong City Council	No	No	No
The Word Bureau	2515 Coast News	Print	NSW	Local	Wollongong City Council	No	No	No
Torch Publishing	Auburn Review	Print	NSW	Local	Cumberland Council	No	No	No
Torch Publishing	The Torch	Print	NSW	Local	Canterbury-Bankstown Council	No	No	No
Torres Strait Islander Media Association	Torres News	Print	NT	Local	Torres Shire	No	No	No
Trafalgar Community Development Association Inc	Traf News	Print	VIC	Local	Baw Baw Shire	No	No	No
Tropic Group	Tropic Now	Print	QLD	Local	Cairns Regional	No	No	No
Uki and District Residents' Association	Uki News	Print	NSW	Local	Tweed Shire Council	No	No	No
Under investigation	The Rotunda	Print	VIC	Local	Yarra City	No	No	No
Under investigation	The Western Herald	Print	NSW	Local	Bourke Shire Council	No	No	No
Under investigation	Thorpdale Community News	Print	VIC	Local	Baw Baw Shire	No	No	No
Under investigation	Gaysa Gazette	Print	NSW	Local	Armidale Regional Council	No	No	No
Under investigation	Newsstead Echo	Print	VIC	Local	Mount Alexander Shire	No	No	No
Under investigation	Norseman Today	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of Dundas	No	No	No
Under investigation	Port Albert Tattler	Print	VIC	Local	Wellington Shire	No	No	No

**PIJI: AUSTRALIAN NEWSROOM MAPPING PROJECT**  
**News outlets without commercial deals with digital platforms**  
**Data as at 31 March 2022**

BUSINESS ENTITY	NEWS OUTLET	PRIMARY FORMAT	STATE	NEWS SCALE	LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA	ACMA REGISTRATION	GOOGLE DEAL	META DEAL
Under investigation	Smoke Signals	Print	TAS	Local	George Town Council	No	No	No
Under investigation	Tableland Talk	Print	VIC	Local	Strathbogie Shire	No	No	No
Uralla Wordsworth Inc	Uralla Wordsworth	Print	NSW	Local	Uralla Shire Council	No	No	No
Valley Voice Publications	Valley and East Coast Voice	Print	TAS	Local	Glamorgan-Spring Bay Council	No	No	No
Village of Hall and District Progress Association Inc	The Rural Fringe	Print	ACT	Local	Pass Valley Council	No	No	No
Walpole Community Resource Centre	Walpole Weekly	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of Manjimup	No	No	No
Wandering Community Resource Centre Inc	Wandering Echo	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of Wandering	No	No	No
Waranga News Inc	Waranga News	Print	VIC	Local	Campaspe Shire	No	No	No
Warrandyte Diary Pty Ltd	Warrandyte Diary	Print	VIC	Local	Manningham City	No	No	No
Weekly Times Gladesville Pty Ltd	The Weekly Times	Print	NSW	Local	Lane Cove Municipal Council	No	No	No
Welcome Record Inc	The Welcome Record	Print	VIC	Local	Central Goldfields Shire	No	No	No
West Arthur Community Resource Centre	The Bleat	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of West Arthur	No	No	No
Western Sydney Publishing Group Pty Ltd	Parra News	Print	NSW	Local	City Of Parramatta Council	YES	No	No
Western Sydney Publishing Group Pty Ltd	Western Weekender	Print	NSW	Local	Penrith City Council	YES	No	No
Whippet Enterprises	The Whippet	Print	SA	Local	City Of Onkaparinga	No	No	No
Wilcannia News Committee Inc	Wilcannia News	Print	NSW	Local	Central Darling Shire Council	No	No	No
Wilkie Watson Publications Pty Ltd	Gundagai Independent	Print	NSW	Local	Coolamundra-Gundagai Regional Cour	No	No	No
Wilkie Watson Publications Pty Ltd	Temora Independent	Print	NSW	Local	Temora Shire Council	No	No	No
Wilkie Watson Publications Pty Ltd	Tumbarumba Times	Print	NSW	Local	Snowy Valleys Council	No	No	No
Williams Community Resource Centre	The Williams	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of Williams	No	No	No
Winchelsea Star Organisation Inc	Winchelsea Star	Print	VIC	Local	Surf Coast Shire	No	No	No
Wombaroo Publishers	The District Reporter	Print	NSW	Local	Camden Council	No	No	No
Wongan Community Resource Centre	Wonga-Bailli Boomer	Print	WA	Local	Shire Of Wongan-Ballidu	No	No	No
Word & Pixel Perfection Pty Ltd	Blue Mountains Phoenix	Print	NSW	Local	Blue Mountains City Council	No	No	No
Word & Pixel Perfection Pty Ltd	Cowra Phoenix	Print	NSW	Local	Cowra Shire Council	No	No	No
Word & Pixel Perfection Pty Ltd	Forbes Phoenix	Print	NSW	Local	Forbes Shire Council	No	No	No
Word & Pixel Perfection Pty Ltd	Mudgee Phoenix	Print	NSW	Local	Mid-Western Regional Council	No	No	No
Word & Pixel Perfection Pty Ltd	Parke Phoenix	Print	NSW	Local	Parke Shire Council	No	No	No
Word Count Media Pty Ltd	Pittwater Life	Print	NSW	Local	Northern Beaches Council	No	No	No
Wren Enterprises Pty Ltd	The Lake News	Print	QLD	Local	Brisbane City	No	No	No
Yamaji Languages Aboriginal Corporation	Mulga Mail	Print	WA	Local	City Of Greater Geraldton	No	No	No
Zanari Family Trust	Tennant & District Times	Print	NT	Local	Barkly Region	No	No	No

BUSINESS ENTITY #	NEWS OUTLET #	PRIMARY FORMAT #	STATE	NEWS SCALE #	LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA	ACMA REGISTRATION #	GOOGLE DEAL	META DEAL
Business entities and outlets								
Recorded	237	296						
Under investigation	11							
Primary format								
Print				237				
Digital				59				
News scale								
National				11				
State or territory				0				
Metro				1				
Local				284				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>296</b>		<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

## **Appendix C: About the Public Interest Journalism Initiative (PIJI)**

The Public Interest Journalism Initiative (PIJI) is a specialist think tank advancing a sustainable future for public interest journalism in Australia.

Through our original research and advocacy work, we seek to stimulate public discussion and establish optimal market pre-conditions in investment and regulation that will sustain media diversity and plurality in the long term.

PIJI is a [registered charity](#) with tax concession charity (TCC) status. It is a philanthropically funded, non-profit company limited by guarantee (ABN 69 630 740 153) governed by a Board of independent directors, advised by an Expert Research Panel and Policy Working Group and regulated by the ACNC, ATO and ASIC. PIJI is a limited shelf-life initiative, due to cease operation in 2023 in line with achieving its intended impact.

Our evidence-based approach focuses on three key research themes into public interest journalism: assessment of diversity, community value and support, and investment and financial sustainability.

This submission was prepared by Anna Draffin, Chief Executive Officer and Gary Dickson, Research and Projects Manager, supported by the Policy Working Group.

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# [Public Interest Journalism Initiative]


## CONTACT US

Public Interest Journalism Initiative


ABN 69 630 740 153

[info@piji.com.au](mailto:info@piji.com.au)

[www.piji.com.au](http://www.piji.com.au)

 [@piji\\_journalism](https://twitter.com/piji_journalism)

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