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QUICK GUIDE

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Media and communications resources and information: a quick guide

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This Quick Guide provides a listing of online information for sources relevant to Australian media and communications legislation, standards, policy and industry advocacy.

It also includes links to selected overseas regulatory bodies.

Australian legislation

- The [Broadcasting Services Act 1992](#) (BSA) sets out the regulatory environment for the broadcasting industry in Australia; it confers a range of functions and powers on the [Australian Communications and Media Authority](#) (ACMA) to regulate and monitor the industry.
- The [Telecommunications Act 1997](#) provides a regulatory framework for the Australian telecommunications industry.
- The [Radiocommunications Act 1992](#) establishes the regulatory regime for management of radiofrequency spectrum in Australia.
- The [Australian Communications and Media Authority Act 2005](#) established ACMA for the purposes of regulating the broadcasting, radio communications and telecommunications sectors according to the provisions of relevant legislation.
- The [Australian Broadcasting Corporation Act 1983](#) provides for the establishment and operation of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC).
- The [Special Broadcasting Service Act 1991](#) provides for the establishment and operations of the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS).
- The [Interactive Gambling Act 2001](#) regulates interactive/Internet gambling services.

Federal regulatory and administrative authorities

- [ACMA](#) is the government agency responsible for the regulation of broadcasting, the Internet, radiocommunications and telecommunications. [ACMA's mandate](#) is 'to deliver a communications and media environment that balances the needs of industry and the Australian community with regulation, education and advice'.
- The [Australian Competition and Consumer Commission](#) (ACCC) is responsible for the economic regulation of telecommunications and the [national broadband network \(nbn\)](#) as well as the broadcasting and content sectors. The ACCC is established under the [Competition and Consumer Act 2010](#) as a non-corporate Commonwealth entity.

- The [Department of Communications and the Arts](#) provides policy advice to the federal government on communications and the arts.
- The [Classification Board](#) classifies films, computer games and publications for exhibition, sale or hire in Australia. The Board operates under rules set out in the [Classification \(Publications, Films and Computer Games\) Act 1995](#).

Non-government regulatory and administrative bodies

- The [Australian Press Council](#) is responsible for promoting standards of media practice, community access to information of public interest and freedom of expression through the media. The Council is also the principal body with responsibility for responding to complaints about Australian newspapers, magazines and associated digital outlets.
- The [Independent Media Council](#) is an industry regulatory body funded by Seven West Media.
- The [Advertising Standards Bureau](#) administers a national system of advertising self-regulation through the Advertising Standards Board and the Advertising Claims Board.
- [Broadcast Australia](#) owns and operates the most extensive multimedia transmission infrastructure in Australia, and provides analogue and digital television and analogue radio for the ABC and SBS.

Ombudsman

- The office of the [Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman](#) provides an independent dispute resolution service for small business and residential customers who have a complaint about their telephone or internet service in Australia. The [Telecommunications \(Consumer Protection and Service Standards\) Act 1999](#) establishes the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman scheme.

National broadcasters

- According to its [Charter](#), the [ABC](#) is required to provide informative, entertaining and educational services that reflect the breadth of the Australian nation.
- [SBS](#) is ‘founded on the belief that all Australians, regardless of geography, age, cultural background or language skills should have access to high quality, independent, culturally-relevant Australian media’.

Government agencies and companies

- The [Australian Film Television and Radio School](#) is a federal statutory authority which ‘exists to enrich the screen arts and broadcast culture through education and training, research and the dissemination of ideas’. The [Australian Film, Television and Radio School Act 1973](#) established the school.
- [Screen Australia](#) is the federal government agency charged with supporting screen development, production and promotion. It was established under the [Screen Australia Act 2008](#).
- The [Australian Children’s Television Foundation](#) is a non-profit company funded by the federal government and the governments of all states and territories (with the exception of Queensland) to distribute and invest in innovative and entertaining children’s media.
- [nbn](#) is a wholly-owned Commonwealth company. The nbn company was established to design, build and operate Australia's broadband network. It currently operates under directions stated in the [National Broadband Network Companies Act 2011](#).

Advocacy groups

- [Commercial Radio Australia](#) is the national industry body representing Australia's commercial radio broadcasters.
- [Free TV Australia](#) is the industry body that represents Australia's commercial free-to-air television licensees.
- The [Community Broadcasting Association of Australia](#) is the peak body representing community radio and television stations. The [Community Broadcasting Foundation](#) is an independent non-profit funding agency that also seeks, secures and distributes funding to support the development, creativity and sustainability of community broadcasting in Australia.
- The [Australian Subscription Television and Radio Association](#) (ASTRA) represents the subscription television and radio industry on regulatory and policy issues.

- The [Australian Interactive Media Industry Association](#) (AIMIA) is the peak body for interactive content and digital media in Australia.
- The [Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance](#) is the union and professional organisation which represents people who work in the media, entertainment, sports and art industries.
- [Australian Council on Children and the Media](#) (ACCM) is a community-based organisation that deals with issues concerning children and the media.
- The [Australian Communications Consumer Action Network](#) (ACCAN) represents individuals, small businesses and not-for-profit groups as consumers of communications products and services in the areas of telecommunications, broadcasting and online services.
- The [Communications Alliance](#) works to promote the growth of the Australian communications industry and the protection of consumer interests by fostering standards of business ethics and behaviour through industry self-governance.
- [Media Access Australia](#) is Australia's only not-for-profit organisation dedicated to increasing web and digital accessibility for people with a disability.

Ratings and circulation information

- [Nielsen Media Research](#) provides statistical information about television and radio audiences and programs.
- Australian TV ratings are compiled by [OzTAM](#) which conducts television audience measurement (TAM), covering the five city metropolitan areas and nationally for subscription television
 - [Regional TAM](#) provides information on free-to-air and subscription television viewing in the five east coast aggregated regional markets (including sub markets) and the regional Western Australian market.
 - [OzTAM's VPM Report](#) provides information on online video content streamed live or played on-demand from broadcasters who participate in its survey.
- [GfK](#) surveys radio audiences in Australia across the [five major mainland metropolitan markets](#)—Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth. It also surveys Newcastle, Canberra and the Gold Coast. Some surveys are also done of other regions by [Xtra Insights](#).
- Information on [print circulation](#) is available from Enhanced Media Metrics Australia (EMMA).

Research

- The University of Canberra [News and Media Research Centre](#) investigates the evolution of media, content and communication and the impact of online and mobile systems.
- The [Centre for Advancing Journalism](#) at the University of Melbourne supports journalism through teaching and research.
- The [Centre for Media History](#) at Macquarie University is Australia's only centre dedicated to conducting and fostering research on the history of the media and history in the media.
- The [Digital Media Research Centre](#) at the Queensland University of Technology address the challenges associated with digital media for journalism, public communication and democracy as well as the regulatory challenges of digital media economies.
- The [International Association for Media and Communication Research](#) encourages research in the areas of media production and consumption and the structure and transformation of media and communication markets.
- Media is one of the areas of interest of the United States [Pew Research Centre](#) which conducts public opinion polling, demographic research, content analysis and other data-driven social science research.
- The [Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development](#) (OECD) produces occasional papers on media and [collects statistics](#) on media and information technology.
- The [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization](#) (UNESCO) promotes the free flow of ideas by word and image. It works to foster free, independent and pluralistic media in print, broadcast and online.

- The [European Audiovisual Observatory](#) collects and distributes information about audiovisual industries in Europe.

Selected overseas government and regulatory websites

European Union

- The [European Union](#) imposes rules to ensure that audio visual media can circulate freely and fairly in the single European market.

United Kingdom

- The United Kingdom [Department for Culture, Media and Sport](#) is responsible for media policies and programs.
- The [Office of Communications \(OFCOM\)](#) is the independent media regulator and competition authority for UK communications industries.

Canada

- The [Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission](#) is responsible for regulating Canada's broadcasting and telecommunication systems. Its mandate is administered through the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

United States

- The [Federal Communications Commission](#) is the American government agency charged with regulating interstate and international communications by radio, television, wire, satellite and cable.

New Zealand

- The [Ministry for Culture and Heritage](#) deals with the arts, heritage, broadcasting and sports sectors.

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