



Star News Group Pty Ltd submission to the Treasury Laws Amendment (News Media and Digital Platforms Mandatory Bargaining Code) Bill 2020

Star News Group supports a bargaining code, but is concerned that the draft bill significantly benefits larger media organisations and will reduce the number of newsmedia voices and diversity.

This is evident in the proposed arbitration process which will be difficult, costly and intimidating and would seem unnecessary. Small organisations will likely not participate or give up quickly.

A code which enforces the digital platforms to pay without an upper limit risks the code failing. A limit is essential.

Star News Group is of the opinion that the value exchange should be calculated based on the number of professionally trained journalists, who produce clearly defined news content. The amount the digital platforms pay would be based on a percentage of that direct cost to employ those journalists. The total amount any news organisation receives should be capped to a total number of journalists.

Star News Group is also concerned that the minimum standards, whilst important, are too onerous on the digital platforms and again this is to pacify the largest media organisations in the country. Smaller news organisations do not need this and if these minimum standards result in an impractical and non-commercial outcome, this will happen only to satisfy the largest of media organisations in the country.

The ACCC and the Government needs to carefully consider the outcomes of the proposed legislation do not impact the diversity of media and threaten smaller organisations, the key elements we believe this bill should be addressing.

Australia's media is already dominated by major media organisations and this bill, as it stands, will provide the opportunity for those organisations to dominate the media landscape even more.