

s22 - out of scope



From: s47F
Sent: Monday, 2 November 2020 10:34 AM
To: s47F
Bloxsom, Ryan <Ryan.Bloxsom@communications.gov.au>
Subject: Rudd petition [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

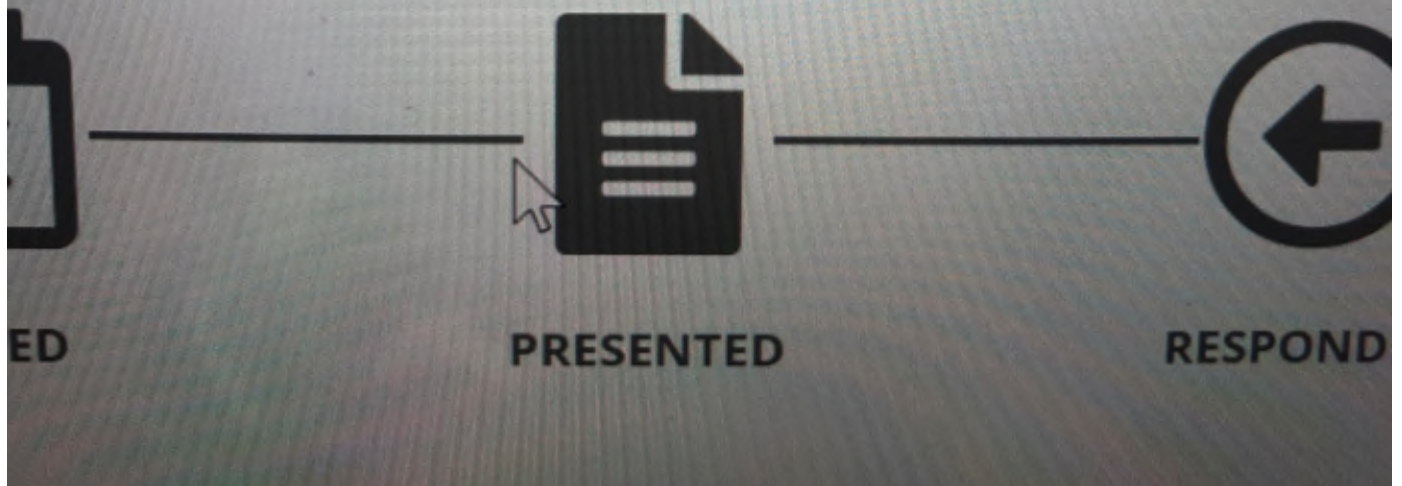
Hi

This is what the APH website says about the Rudd petition and media are asking what we plan to do:

yal Commission to ens

ew

The petition has been presented to the House and is awaiting a response from the Minister responsible for the matter(s) raised in the petition request.



s47F

| Senior Media Adviser

Office of the Hon Paul Fletcher MP

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

Commonwealth Parliamentary Offices | 1 Bligh Street | Sydney NSW 2000

Suite MG.48 | Parliament House | Canberra ACT 2600

s47F

UNCLASSIFIED

s47C



s22 - out of scope

From: s47F
Sent: Wednesday, 4 November 2020 7:29 PM
To: s47F
Subject: Fwd: Kevin Rudd petition [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Oh wonderful

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: s47F
Date: 4 November 2020 at 7:10:36 pm AEDT
To: s47F
Cc: s47F
Subject: RE: Kevin Rudd petition [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s47F
I've spoken directly to s47F who explained that it was one of our DLO's who had incorrectly advised them that this should come to us.
It will now be sent direct to your office.
Thanks for your patience.
s47F

OFFICIAL

From: s47F
Sent: Wednesday, 4 November 2020 1:56 PM
To: s47F
Subject: FW: Kevin Rudd petition [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organisation. Do not follow guidance, click links, or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

s47F – here you go. The contact is s47F and her details are attached.

Regards,

s47F

For Official Use Only

From: Committee, Petitions (Reps) <petitions.committee.reps@aph.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 4 November 2020 2:14 PM

To: s47F Committee, Petitions (Reps)
<petitions.committee.reps@aph.gov.au>

Cc: s47F s47F

Bloxsom, Ryan
<Ryan.Bloxsom@communications.gov.au>; s47F

Subject: RE: Kevin Rudd petition [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

For Official Use Only

Good afternoon s47F

Please see below for comment on your statements:

"The petition initiated by Mr Rudd will be considered by the Petitions Committee of the Parliament. In line with its usual practice the Committee is expected to refer it to the relevant portfolio Minister - in this case the Minister for Communications - for advice.

The petition has already been considered by the Committee prior to it being published and made available to collect signatures. The Committee considers petitions against the standing orders to make sure they are compliant. When the petition has closed for signatures (today is the last day) it will be presented to the House and referred to a minister for a response. Because this petition is requesting a Royal Commission, it will be referred to the Attorney-General. This has been decided upon advice from the AGs department. They may request input from your office in the preparation of the response, but will have main carriage of it.

"The Minister will consider the petition and prepare a response to the Committee should it be referred to him.

Correct, see comment above, but it will be the AG and not your Minister.

"The lodgement of a petition with the Parliament does not compel the Parliament to consider the matter or to take the action proposed in the petition.

Correct. A petition is one indication of the support within the community on a certain issue and not a binding vote. It is up to the Government of the day as to what action, if any, is taken.

"As a matter of process, royal commissions are initiated by the Governor-General on the advice of the government of the day; they are not initiated by a vote of the Parliament."

You may wish to contact the Attorney-General's office to confirm this statement.

Regards

s47F

| Inquiry Secretary

Standing Committee on Petitions

Department of the House of Representatives

PO Box 6021 | R1.106.3 Parliament House | Canberra ACT 2600

Ph. s47F | www.aph.gov.au/house

Facebook: @AboutTheHouseAU | **Twitter:** @AboutTheHouse



At the Department of the House of Representatives we recognise and pay our respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples of Australia.

From: s47F
Sent: Wednesday, 4 November 2020 1:05 PM
To: Committee, Petitions (Reps)
Cc: s47F s47F Bloxsom, Ryan
Subject: Kevin Rudd petition [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Hi team,

Minister Fletcher is fielding a lot of media inquiries about the petition from the former prime minister, Kevin Rudd, calling for a Royal Commission into Australian news media.

Could you please assist us by checking that the following lines for a media response are *factually correct*?

“The petition initiated by Mr Rudd will be considered by the Petitions Committee of the Parliament. In line with its usual practice the Committee is expected to refer it to the relevant portfolio Minister - in this case the Minister for Communications - for advice.

“The Minister will consider the petition and prepare a response to the Committee should it be referred to him.

“The lodgement of a petition with the Parliament does not compel the Parliament to consider the matter or to take the action proposed in the petition.

“As a matter of process, royal commissions are initiated by the Governor-General on the advice of the government of the day; they are not initiated by a vote of the Parliament.”

If you were able to turn around a response ASAP that would be greatly appreciated.

Regards,

s47F

| Assistant Adviser
Office of the Hon. Paul Fletcher MP
Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

Commonwealth Parliamentary Offices | 1 Bligh Street | Sydney NSW 2000 | 02 8289 9930

T: s47F

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s22 - out of scope

From: Fletcher, Paul s47F
Sent: Wednesday, 4 November 2020 8:12 AM
To: s47F
Cc: s47F Bloxsom, Ryan
<Ryan.Bloxsom@communications.gov.au>
Subject: Re: House of Reps petition [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

I'd suggest the following: discuss with s47C before finalising (& double check it is technically accurate)

"The petition initiated by Mr Rudd will be considered by the Petitions Committee of the Parliament. In line with its usual practice the Committee is expected to refer it to the relevant portfolio Minister - in this case the Minister for Communications - for advice.

The Minister will consider the petition and prepare a response to the Committee should it be referred to him.

The lodgement of a petition with the Parliament does not compel the Parliament to consider the matter or to take the action proposed in the petition.

As a matter of process, royal commissions are initiated by the Governor-General on the advice of the government of the day; they are not initiated by a vote of the Parliament."

Sent from my iPad

On 4 Nov 2020, at 6:18 am, s47F > wrote:

On the basis of this I am not sure we can say more than "the Government will consider the petition". Thoughts?

Sent from my iPhone

On 3 Nov 2020, at 12:40 pm, s47F wrote:

Hi Minister,

s47F has said you are seeking some further information on the petitions process.

Petitions presented to the House are usually referred by the Petitions Committee to the Minister who is responsible for the subject area of the petition. The Minister will send a response to the Petitions Committee which will also be presented to the House. Unlike other Parliaments around the world, where petitions which reach a 'signature threshold' are debated, **petitions are not debated in the House of Representatives.**

In the case of the [Rudd petition](#), once the petition closes tomorrow, it will be likely referred to you by the Petitions Committee. You will be asked for a response, although strictly speaking you do not have to provide one. For the avoidance of doubt, there is no way that the petition can directly result in a Royal Commission being called – only the Governor-General can do that, on the advice of the Prime Minister.

Regards,

s47F

 | Assistant Adviser
Office of the Hon. Paul Fletcher MP
Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

Commonwealth Parliamentary Offices | 1 Bligh Street | Sydney NSW 2000 | 02 8289 9930

Suite MG.48 | Parliament House | Canberra ACT 2600 | 02 6277 7081

s47F

For Official Use Only

s47F

From: Committee, Petitions (Reps) <petitions.committee.reps@aph.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 5 November 2020 10:06 AM
To: s47F Committee, Petitions (Reps)
Cc: s47F Bloxsom, Ryan; s47F
Subject: RE: Kevin Rudd petition [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

For Official Use Only

Great, thank you s47F

We're still not sure when the petition will be presented, but it's likely to be in the next sitting week commencing 9 November.

Regards

s47F

| *Inquiry Secretary*

Standing Committee on Petitions

Department of the House of Representatives

PO Box 6021 | R1.106.3 Parliament House | Canberra ACT 2600

Ph s47F | www.aph.gov.au/house

Facebook: @AboutTheHouseAU | **Twitter:** @AboutTheHouse

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At the Department of the House of Representatives we recognise and pay our respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples of Australia.

From: s47F

Sent: Thursday, 5 November 2020 9:38 AM

To: Committee, Petitions (Reps)

Cc: s47F Bloxsom, Ryan; s47F

Subject: RE: Kevin Rudd petition [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Hi s47F

We are fine for you to forward the letter of referral to us when the petition is presented.

Regards,

s47F

Office of the Hon. Paul Fletcher MP
 Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

Commonwealth Parliamentary Offices | 1 Bligh Street | Sydney NSW 2000 | 02 8289 9930

s47F

For Official Use Only

From: Committee, Petitions (Reps)

Sent: Wednesday, 4 November 2020 7:04 PM

To: s47F Committee, Petitions (Reps)

Cc: s47F ; Bloxsom, Ryan ; s47F

Subject: RE: Kevin Rudd petition [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

For Official Use Only

Thanks s47F

I've just confirmed with the Attorney-General's office that your minister is best placed to respond to this petition. If you agree, we will forward the letter of referral when the petition is presented.

The petition may be presented by the Committee Chair this Monday 9 November, or by another Member at a time and date to be determined. We're waiting on further advice regarding this.

Regards

s47F

| *Inquiry Secretary*

Standing Committee on Petitions

Department of the House of Representatives

PO Box 6021 | R1.106.3 Parliament House | Canberra ACT 2600

s47F | www.aph.gov.au/house

Facebook: @AboutTheHouseAU | **Twitter:** @AboutTheHouse

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At the Department of the House of Representatives we recognise and pay our respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples of Australia.

From: s47F

Sent: Wednesday, 4 November 2020 6:24 PM

To: Committee, Petitions (Reps)

Cc: s47F s47F Bloxsom, Ryan; s47F

Subject: RE: Kevin Rudd petition [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Thanks, s47F

We'll hold off on responding to the media inquiries until we have more concrete advice.

Cheers,

s47F

| Assistant Adviser

Office of the Hon. Paul Fletcher MP

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

Commonwealth Parliamentary Offices | 1 Bligh Street | Sydney NSW 2000 | 02 8289 9930
Suite MG.48 | Parliament House | Canberra ACT 2600 | 02 6277 7081

s47F

For Official Use Only

From: Committee, Petitions (Reps) <petitions.committee.reps@aph.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 4 November 2020 6:23 PM

To: s47F Committee, Petitions (Reps)

<petitions.committee.reps@aph.gov.au>

Cc: s47F

s47F Bloxsom, Ryan <Ryan.Bloxsom@communications.gov.au>; s47F

Subject: RE: Kevin Rudd petition [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

For Official Use Only

Hi s47F,

I've just been speaking with the Attorney-General's office and have received different advice than previously provided. I'm waiting to hear back from them, but it looks as though they now feel the petition should be best responded to by your minister.

I'll provide you with confirmation of this when I hear back, hopefully soon.

Regards

s47F | *Inquiry Secretary*

Standing Committee on Petitions

Department of the House of Representatives

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Facebook: @AboutTheHouseAU | **Twitter:** @AboutTheHouse

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At the Department of the House of Representatives we recognise and pay our respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples of Australia.

From: s47F

Sent: Wednesday, 4 November 2020 3:14 PM

To: Committee, Petitions (Reps)

Cc: s47F; Bloxsom, Ryan; s47F

Subject: RE: Kevin Rudd petition [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Hi s47F

Thanks very much for providing this information. Good thing we checked with you guys before we responded to those media inquiries!

Cheers,

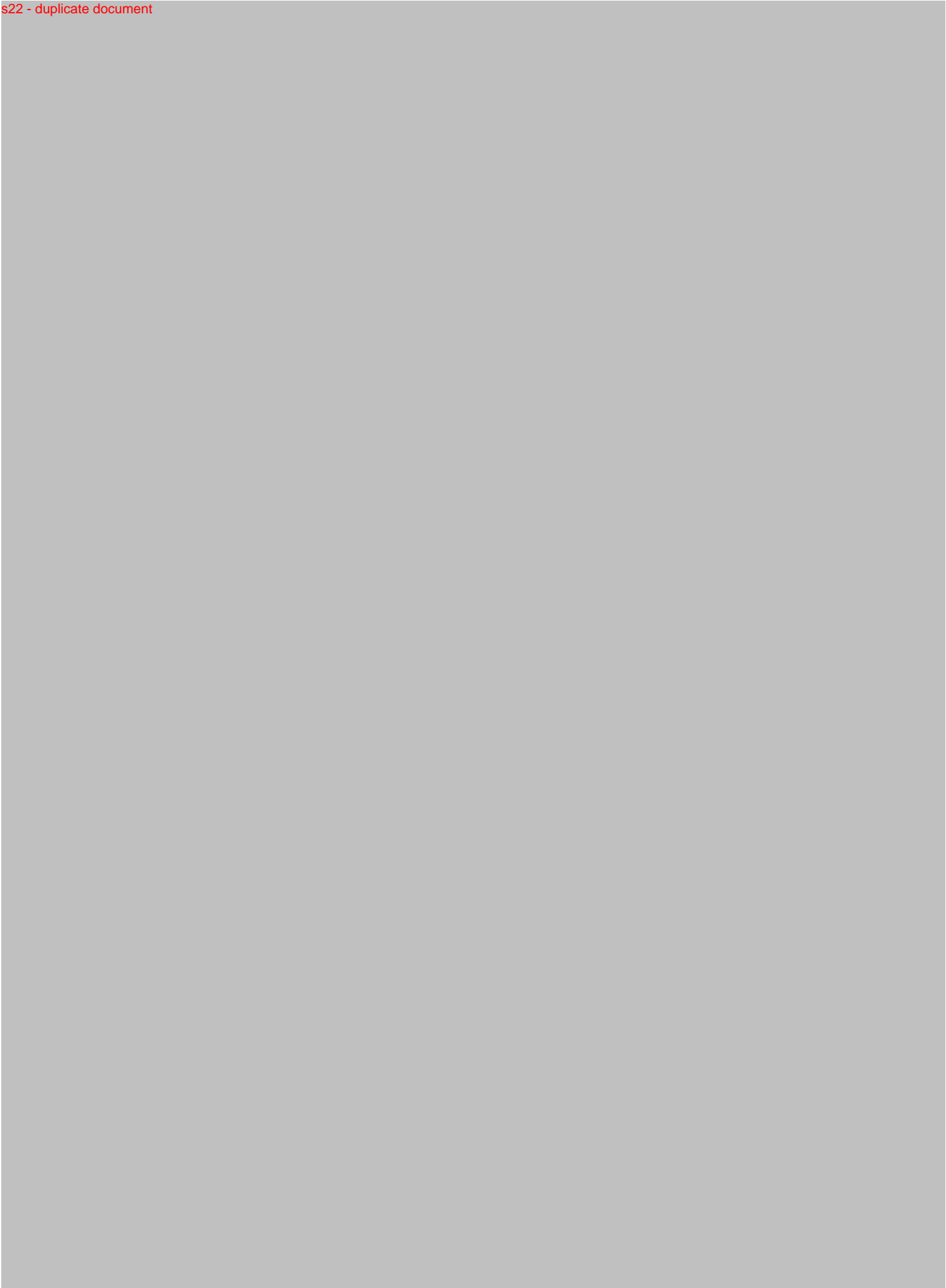
s47F

| Assistant Adviser
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s47F

s22 - duplicate document



s47F

From: s47F
Sent: Thursday, 5 November 2020 10:04 AM
To: s47F
Cc: Bloxsom, Ryan; s47F
Subject: RE: Proposed line for The Australian on petition [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Only change I think we need is that PF is Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

s47F | Senior Adviser
 Office of the Hon Paul Fletcher MP
 Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

Commonwealth Parliamentary Offices | 1 Bligh Street | Sydney NSW 2000 Suite MG.48 | Parliament House |
 Canberra ACT 2600

I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land on which we meet, work and live. I recognise and respect their continuing connection to the land, waters and communities. I pay my respect to Elders past and present and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

For Official Use Only

-----Original Message-----

From: s47F
Sent: Thursday, 5 November 2020 9:59 AM
To: s47F
Cc: Bloxsom, Ryan <Ryan.Bloxsom@communications.gov.au>; s47F
Subject: Proposed line for The Australian on petition

"The petition initiated by Mr Rudd will be considered by the Petitions Committee of the Parliament. In line with its usual practice the Committee is expected to refer it to the relevant portfolio Minister - in this case the Minister for Communications - for advice.

"The Minister will consider the petition and prepare a response to the Committee.

"The lodgement of a petition with the Parliament does not compel the Parliament to consider the matter or to take the action proposed in the petition.

"As a matter of process, royal commissions are initiated by the Governor-General on the advice of the government of the day."

Sent from my iPhone

s47F

From: s47F
Sent: Friday, 6 November 2020 5:29 PM
To: s47F
Cc: s47F; Bloxsom, Ryan; s47F
Subject: Re: Rudd petition [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

If you are happy with it feel free to send. Inquiry is from

s47F

s47F

Sent from my iPhone

On 6 Nov 2020, at 5:24 pm, s47F wrote:

Hi all,
s47F has a longer form standard letter that the Dept put together and includes lines similar to those below. Standard letters are normally more verbose than TPs like those below.
Let me know what you want to do!

Cheers,

s47F

| Assistant Adviser

Office of the Hon. Paul Fletcher MP

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

Commonwealth Parliamentary Offices | 1 Blich Street | Sydney NSW 2000 | 02 8289 9930

Suite MG.48 | Parliament House | Canberra ACT 2600 | 02 6277 7081

s47F

From: s47F
Sent: Friday, 6 November 2020 4:35 PM
To: s47F; Bloxsom, Ryan; s47F
Cc: s47F
Subject: Rudd petition [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

MPs are starting to get campaign emails on the petition and one office has asked me for lines.
I'm new to this. How about something like:

"The Minister for Communications will consider the petition and prepare a response.

"The lodgement of a petition with the Parliament does not compel the Parliament to consider the matter or to take the action proposed in the petition.

"As a matter of process, royal commissions are initiated by the Governor-General on the advice of the government of the day.

"The Morrison Government places a high value on a vibrant, diverse media sector, both in the cities and across the regions.

"With the media and broadcasting sector hit hard by COVID-19, the Government has provided vital support.

"The \$50 million Public Interest News Gathering Program aims to support the continued production of high quality news in regional and remote areas of Australia through provision of financial assistance to media outlets that publish or broadcast public interest journalism."

s47F

| **Senior Media Adviser**

Office of the Hon Paul Fletcher MP

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

Commonwealth Parliamentary Offices | 1 Bligh Street | Sydney NSW 2000

Suite MG.48 | Parliament House | Canberra ACT 2600

s47F

UNCLASSIFIED

s22 - out of scope



From: s47F
Sent: Tuesday, 2 February 2021 9:18 AM
To: s47F
Cc: Bloxsom, Ryan <Ryan.Bloxsom@communications.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Petition letter [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

When will it be tabled?

For Official Use Only

From: s47F
Sent: Tuesday, 2 February 2021 8:52 AM
To: s47F; s47F
Cc: Bloxsom, Ryan <Ryan.Bloxsom@communications.gov.au>
Subject: Fwd: Petition letter [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Hi s47F
This is Minister's response to the Rudd petition letter. It's likely to attract some media attention when tabled.
Cheers
s47F



Senior Adviser
Office of the Hon Paul Fletcher
Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts

Begin forwarded message:

From: s47F
Date: 2 February 2021 at 7:12:55 am AEDT
To: "s47F"
Subject: RE: Petition letter [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Hi s47F

Please see attached.

Regards

s47F

For Official Use Only

-----Original Message-----

From: s47F

Sent: Tuesday, 2 February 2021 5:53 AM

To: s47F

Subject: Petition letter [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Hi s47F

Would you be able to provide s47F and me with a copy of the petition letter that you sent to s47F yesterday.

Thanks

s47F

s47F

Senior Adviser

Office of the Hon Paul Fletcher

Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts

s22 - out of scope

From: s47F
Sent: Monday, 22 February 2021 12:25 PM
To: s47F s47F
Subject: RE: ABC News request [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Thanks s47F much appreciated.

s47F

From: s47F
Sent: Monday, 22 February 2021 12:12
To: s47F
Subject: RE: ABC News request [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Yes, that's right s47F: I understand the Minister's response has now been tabled as part of the Petitions Committee report.

s47F

UNCLASSIFIED

From: s47F
Sent: Monday, 22 February 2021 12:09 PM
To: s47F s47F
Subject: ABC News request

Hi s47F and s47F

Wondering if you're in a position to confirm this report in The Australian, that Minister Fletcher has recommended not pursuing an inquiry as per former prime minister Kevin Rudd's petition.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/media/kevin-rudd-falls-short-in-bid-for-royal-commission-into-media-diversity/news-story/5c7482d49928bfe4831b35827278f047>

Is there any statement available, or a copy of the correspondence from the Minister to the Standing Committee on Petitions available?

Cheers,

s47F

s22 - out of scope

From: s47F
Sent: Monday, 22 February 2021 3:05 PM
To: s47F
Subject: RE: Rudd petition [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Here is the letter itself – which is available online.

UNCLASSIFIED

From: s47F
Sent: Monday, 22 February 2021 2:45 PM
To: s47F
Subject: RE: Rudd petition [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Perfect. thanks

s47F | **Senior Adviser**
Office of the Hon Paul Fletcher MP
Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts

Commonwealth Parliamentary Offices | 1 Bligh Street | Sydney NSW 2000
Suite MG.48 | Parliament House | Canberra ACT 2600

UNCLASSIFIED

From: s47F
Sent: Monday, 22 February 2021 2:41 PM
To: s47F
Subject: RE: Rudd petition [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

I'll knock something together from what I sent the Oz

UNCLASSIFIED

From: s47F
Sent: Monday, 22 February 2021 2:40 PM
To: s47F
Subject: Rudd petition [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Do you have any talking points on media diversity and the Rudd Petition.

AGs has asked us to provide.

s47F

| **Senior Adviser**

Office of the Hon Paul Fletcher MP

Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts

Commonwealth Parliamentary Offices | 1 Bligh Street | Sydney NSW 2000

Suite MG.48 | Parliament House | Canberra ACT 2600

UNCLASSIFIED



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA • HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PAUL FLETCHER MP

Federal Member for Bradfield
Minister for Communications,
Urban Infrastructure,
Cities & the Arts

s47F

Thank you for your email dated 9 November 2020, concerning petition number EN1938, requesting the establishment of a Royal Commission to ensure the strength and diversity of Australian news media.

The signatories of the petition have expressed concern about the state of the Australian news media industry, with a particular focus on diversity of media ownership. The signatories are requesting that the House of Representatives support the establishment of a Royal Commission to ensure the strength and diversity of Australian news media.

As a matter of process, while the petition is presented to the Parliament, it is not the Parliament which has the power to initiate a Royal Commission. Royal Commissions are initiated by the Governor-General on the advice of the Government of the day. The Australian Government will not be advising the Governor-General to initiate a Royal Commission into Australian news media.

The Government supports a diverse and sustainable media sector. It also recognises that quality news and public interest journalism play an important role in the functioning of Australian society and democracy and is essential to informing local communities, particularly in relation to national and global events.

The *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* contains a number of rules regarding the control and diversity of media ownership in Australia. These rules support a diverse media sector by limiting the number of media operations that can be controlled by a person in a licence area. The Act defines a media operation as a commercial television broadcasting licence, a commercial radio broadcasting licence, or an associated newspaper.

The Government recognises that media companies have been facing challenging market conditions with declining audience numbers and difficult advertising conditions. The sharp downturn in advertising revenue across the whole sector due to the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly increased these challenges.

The Government has acted decisively in the national interest to support businesses and address the significant economic consequences of COVID-19, and has announced a range of measures to help Australian media businesses, including:

- **Investing in regional journalism** – A \$50 million Public Interest News Gathering program for commercial television and radio broadcasters and newspapers in regional Australia. This has provided funding to 107 regional publishers and broadcasters who applied to the program. In addition, the Government will provide \$5 million to the Australian Associated Press Limited Newswire under the program. This increases the Government's investment in the program to \$55 million.
- **Regional and Small Publishers Innovation Fund** – The Government brought forward the release of \$5 million from the Regional and Small Publishers Innovation Fund. The Fund's 2020 round has provided funding to 41 regional and small publishers producing public interest journalism.
- **Tax relief** – A 12-month waiver, backdated to start from 14 February 2020, of spectrum tax for commercial television and radio broadcasters worth \$41 million.
- **Short-term red tape relief** – Emergency suspension of content quotas in 2020.
- **Support for Australian screen content** – The Government has simplified regulations and is injecting \$53 million into the development and production of local film and television.

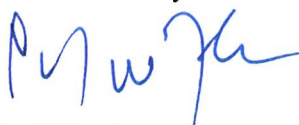
On 27 November 2020, the Government announced the next stage of its media reform program with the release of a media reform green paper. The green paper outlines a set of proposals to improve the sustainability of Australian media businesses and the range and quality of services and content available to all Australians. The proposals in the green paper are not final, and the Government welcomes an open dialogue with stakeholders in regional Australia during the consultation period.

In addition, on 9 December 2020, the Government introduced the News Media and Digital Platforms Mandatory Code into the Parliament. The code will support a diverse and sustainable news media sector by addressing the bargaining power imbalance between news businesses and digital platforms, and requiring Google and Facebook to fairly remunerate news businesses for the use of their content online.

The development of a code of conduct is part of the Government's response to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's Digital Platforms Inquiry to promote competition, enhance consumer protection and support a sustainable Australian media landscape in the digital age.

Thank you for bringing this petition to my attention. I trust this information will be of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely



Paul Fletcher

30/1/2021

s47F

From: s47F
Sent: Thursday, 8 April 2021 2:38 PM
To: s47F
Cc: Bloxsom, Ryan
Subject: RE: Media Diversity in Australia - public hearing on Monday, 12 April [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

s47C

s47F | **Assistant Adviser**
Office of the Hon. Paul Fletcher, MP
Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts

Commonwealth Parliamentary Offices | 1 Bligh Street | Sydney NSW 2000 | 02 8289 9930
 Suite MG.48 | Parliament House | Canberra ACT 2600 | 02 6277 7480

s47F

OFFICIAL

From: s47F
Sent: Thursday, 8 April 2021 12:49 PM
To: s47F
Cc: Bloxsom, Ryan <Ryan.Bloxsom@communications.gov.au>; s47F
Subject: Media Diversity in Australia - public hearing on Monday, 12 April [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s47F

I hope you're well!

There is now another hearing before the Senate Environment and Communications References Committee on Media Diversity in Australia – this will be on Monday, 12 April (this Monday). Information on this has only just been [posted](#).

Appearing before the Committee on Monday per the attached program will be:

- Malcolm Turnbull (with no submission);
- Dr Michael E Mann (Penn State University) (also with no submission);
- Facebook (with a submission);
- WIN TV, Prime Media Group and Imparja (together and with a joint submission); and
- Mr Bruce Guthrie (The New Daily), Mr Peter Fray (Crikey) and Mr Andrew Jaspan (The Conversation) in their private capacities (with a joint submission also).

I have attached the relevant submissions (in the zip folder) and the program for you to look at. For reference, [this is the membership](#) for the References Committee.

Submissions and program for public hearing
 are publicly available documents
 - out of scope (s22).

s47C



s47F copying you as you were involved in the last hearing and may provide some insight.

Yours sincerely,

s47F | **Assistant Adviser**

Office of the Hon Paul Fletcher MP

Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts

Commonwealth Parliamentary Offices | 1 Bligh Street | Sydney NSW 2000 | (02) 8289 9930
Suite MG.48 | Parliament House | Canberra ACT 2600 | (02) 6277 7480

s47F



I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land on which we meet, work and live. I recognise and respect their continuing connection to the land, waters and communities. I pay my respect to Elders past and present and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

OFFICIAL

s47F

From: s47F
Sent: Friday, 9 April 2021 3:42 PM
To: s47F
Subject: RE: Media Diversity in Australia - public hearing on Monday, 12 April [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Amazing, thanks s47F

Yours sincerely,

s47F | **Assistant Adviser**
Office of the Hon Paul Fletcher MP
Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts

Commonwealth Parliamentary Offices | 1 Bligh Street | Sydney NSW 2000 | (02) 8289 9930
Suite MG.48 | Parliament House | Canberra ACT 2600 | (02) 6277 7480

s47F

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OFFICIAL

From: s47F
Sent: Friday, 9 April 2021 3:36 PM
To: s47F
Subject: RE: Media Diversity in Australia - public hearing on Monday, 12 April [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

In addition to what you have set out below in relation to the Green Paper and the QTB on Regional – please pass on to our Senators that:

- Current media ownership restrictions in the Broadcasting Services Act prevent a TV broadcaster from owning more than one licence in any market (except in some very small markets where there are exceptions allowing the existing two licence holders to hold the third licence in a JV);
- What the Regional broadcasters have put forward in their submission to this inquiry (and have been campaigning for under the banner Save Our Voices) is that those ownership restrictions should be removed for regional broadcasters and they should be permitted to merge with each other – so there might just be one licensee in a market.
- The Green Paper process offers an opportunity for broadcasters – regional and metropolitan – to put forward proposals and ideas which, in their view, would make their businesses more sustainable.

s47F | **Senior Adviser**

OFFICIAL

From: s47F
Sent: Friday, 9 April 2021 2:59 PM
To: s47F
Subject: FW: Media Diversity in Australia - public hearing on Monday, 12 April [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hiya,

Sorry to hassle about this – the Minister didn't seem phased yesterday when told that Malcolm and the regionals were appearing on Monday and, as s47F mentioned yesterday, the last hearing presented nothing of concern.

Just checking that you're not worried about anything or think we should provide any background to our Senators ahead of Monday?

s47F raised an issue (again) today re the green paper and I've found these words which should provide some background:

On 27 November 2020, the Government announced the next stage of its media reform program with the release of a Media Reform Green Paper.

The Green Paper outlines a set of proposals to improve the sustainability of Australian media businesses and the range and quality of services and content available to all Australians.

The Green Paper proposes to:

- offer commercial broadcasters a one time, irrevocable choice to operate under a new commercial television broadcasting licence, with a reduced regulatory burden, provided they agree to move at a future point to using substantially less radiofrequency spectrum;
- promote the public interest derived from spectrum by encouraging multiplex sharing by broadcasters;
- introduce an investment obligation for subscription and advertising video-on-demand services, with details to be further developed over the next 12 months;
- invest in the future, by using the proceeds raised through the reform process to fund public policy initiatives that deliver value for the Australian public and support the media sector; and
- formalise the role of national broadcasters as key providers of Australian content.

The centrepiece of our proposed reforms is a new category of licence for commercial television broadcasters. Under this proposal, the holders of existing commercial television broadcasting licenses would have the option to make a one-time transition to a new licence.

The new licence would allow broadcasters to operate under a lower cost model with two important changes to the present arrangements.

- First, the holder of a new licence would no longer be required to pay a tax for the use of spectrum.
- Second, the holder of a new licence would be required to transition to using less radiofrequency spectrum, to be initiated by Government when certain conditions were met.

Advances in technology mean that broadcasters could move to transmission arrangements which use less spectrum, but which maintain their service levels at close to current levels with a minimal impact on viewers.

This provides an opportunity to realise a second digital dividend through the auction of available spectrum.

A portion of auction proceeds could be used to fund measures that support key media policy outcomes such as the production and distribution of public interest journalism and the creation and distribution of Australian content.

The release of the Green Paper is intended to start a conversation with industry and the Australian public about what our future media regulatory framework should look like.

The proposals in the Green Paper are not final, and the Government welcomes an open dialogue with industry during the consultation period.

Importantly – this is also an opportunity for television broadcasters – regional and metropolitan – to put forward other proposals and ideas which, in their view, would make their businesses more sustainable.

The Government is seeking public submissions on the Green Paper by 23 May 2021. The Government appreciates the significance of the proposed reforms and will take all stakeholder feedback into account in the development of the final reform proposals.

Are you comfortable with me providing these and / or would you like me to give them something else as well?

Yours sincerely,

s47F | **Assistant Adviser**
Office of the Hon Paul Fletcher MP
Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts

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s47F

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