

s47F

From: s47F
Sent: Monday, 22 February 2021 3:06 PM
To: s47F
Subject: RE: Rudd petition [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]
Attachments: MS20-000885 - Fletcher to Petitions Committee Chair - Petition EN1938 - Kevin Rudd petition on Australian news media.pdf

Attachment not included as
duplicate of document
captured in FMO 21-019 -
out of scope (s22).

Here is the letter itself – which is available online.

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 2:57 PM
To: s47F
Subject: FW: Rudd petition [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

s47F

s47F has asked me to pass on to you some talking points regarding the Rudd petition and media diversity.

Please let me know if the below is sufficient or do you require something more fulsome.

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 2:45 PM
To: s47F
Subject: RE: Rudd petition [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Here you go:

- Royal Commissions are not initiated by the Parliament; they are initiated by the Governor-General based on advice from the Government.
- The Minister for Communications has informed the Petitions Committee that the Government will not be advising the Governor-General to initiate a Royal Commission into Australian news media.
- Australia is fortunate to have a vibrant, diverse and contentious media sector.
- Rules regarding the control of media ownership in Australia support this diverse media sector by limiting the number of media operations that can be controlled by a person in a licence area.
- Nevertheless, the Government recognises there are serious challenges confronting the sector.

- One of these concerns the sustainability of public interest journalism in the light of the bargaining power imbalance between traditional media outlets and global online platforms: this is why the Government has introduced the News Media and Digital Platforms Mandatory Code into the Parliament.
- A further challenge arose last year with the sharp downturn in advertising revenue across the whole sector due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Government acted decisively to support Australian media businesses: by investing in regional journalism via a \$50 million Public Interest News Gathering program, along with an additional \$5 million to the Australian Associated Press Limited Newswire; by bringing forward the release of \$5 million from the Regional and Small Publishers Innovation Fund; by targeted tax and red-tape relief; and by injecting \$53 million into the development and production of local film and television.

s47C



s47C

From: DLO <s47E(d)>
Sent: Wednesday, 17 February 2021 2:19 PM
To: s47F
Cc: DLO <s47E(d)>
Subject: RE: Rudd Petition [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi s47F

Please find attached petition and Minister's response to the Petitions Committee.

Regards

UNCLASSIFIED

From: s47F
Sent: Wednesday, 17 February 2021 1:57 PM
To: DLO <s47E(d)>
Subject: Rudd Petition [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Can I please have a copy of the Rudd petition – which I believe is being tabled in parliament next week.

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

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Suite MG.48 | Parliament House | Canberra ACT 2600

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s47F

From: s47F
Sent: Wednesday, 24 February 2021 1:39 PM
To: s47F
Cc: s47F
Subject: RE: URGENT MIN REP: Rudd Petition [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED] [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s47F

Details as follows:

The Hon Kevin Rudd AC, GPO BOX 228, Brisbane QLD 4001, Kevin.Rudd@aph.gov.au
s47F (adviser)

Cheers,

s47F

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: Wednesday, 24 February 2021 12:39 PM
To: s47F
Subject: FW: URGENT MIN REP: Rudd Petition [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED] [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s47F

I am drafting the response to this letter from Kevin Rudd (see attached) and was wondering whether you had an address or email address to send this to? This information wasn't provided as part of the incoming correspondence.

Happy to discuss.

Many thanks,

s47F

A/g Senior Policy Officer / Media Industry Section / News and Media Industry Branch
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications

s47F

2 Phillip Law Street, Canberra ACT 2601
GPO Box 594 Canberra, ACT 2601

communications.gov.au / @CommsAu

arts.gov.au / @artsculturegov

infrastructure.gov.au / @infra_regional

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

From: s47F
Sent: Tuesday, 23 February 2021 17:46
To: Makin, Mike <Mike.Makin@INFRASTRUCTURE.gov.au>
Cc: s47F
DLO <s47E(d)>
Subject: RE: URGENT MIN REP: Rudd Petition [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Thanks Mike!

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: Makin, Mike <Mike.Makin@INFRASTRUCTURE.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 23 February 2021 5:45 PM
To: s47F
DLO <s47E(d)>
Subject: Re: URGENT MIN REP: Rudd Petition [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi s47F

We only received the incoming letter this week, but the team have already got a draft together and I'll review and get it up to the office tomorrow.

Cheers

Mike

Sent from my iPhone

On 23 Feb 2021, at 5:24 pm, Minister <s47F> wrote:

UNCLASSIFIED

From: s47F
Sent: Tuesday, 23 February 2021 3:47 PM
To: DLO <s47E(d)>
Subject: FW: Rudd Petition [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Can you please organise a draft response ASAP. Can be based on the Ministers response to the Petition Committee

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

s47C



From: DLO <s47E(d)>
Sent: Wednesday, 17 February 2021 2:19 PM
To: s47F
Cc: DLO <s47E(d)>
Subject: RE: Rudd Petition [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi s47F

Please find attached petition and Minister's response to the Petitions Committee.

Regards

s47F

UNCLASSIFIED

From: s47F
Sent: Wednesday, 17 February 2021 1:57 PM
To: DLO <s47E(d)>
Subject: Rudd Petition [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Can I please have a copy of the Rudd petition – which I believe is being tabled in parliament next week.

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

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s47F

From: Makin, Mike
Sent: Thursday, 25 February 2021 4:42 PM
To: s47F
Cc: s47F DLO
Subject: RE: URGENT MIN REP: Rudd Petition [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED] [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: MC21-001581.docx; Original Correspondence - Letter.pdf

OFFICIAL

Attachments not included as
 duplicates of documents
 captured in FMO 21-019 -
 out of scope (s22).

Hi s47F

We held off on send this draft response up yesterday as it has a paragraph on the bargaining code and we wanted to wait to update this after it had passed. Draft response attached, and this is on its way in PDMS also.

Cheers,

Mike

Mike Makin

Assistant Secretary / News & Media Industry
 Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications

P +61 2 6271 1031

s47F

mike.makin@communications.gov.au

2 Phillip Law Street, Canberra ACT 2601
 GPO Box 594 Canberra, ACT 2601

communications.gov.au / @CommsAu

arts.gov.au / @artsculturegov

infrastructure.gov.au / @infra_regional

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

s22 - duplicate document



s47F

From: s47F
Sent: Monday, 8 March 2021 11:33 AM
To: DLO
Subject: Letter to Rudd MC21 - 001581 - pls unclear and refer back to me [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Importance: High

OFFICIAL

On Friday I cleared a letter to Keven Rudd – MC21-001581

Can you please refer this back to me instead – as I just remembered s47C

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

OFFICIAL

s47C



s47C



s22 - duplicate document



s47F

From: s47F
Sent: Mondav. 12 April 2021 5:24 PM
To: s47F
Subject: Kevin Rudd letter [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

Hi s47F

MC21-001581 went to the EO for the Minister's signature last Thursday 8/4.

It will be back with us tomorrow and s47C as soon as we receive it.

Regards

s47F

s47F

Senior Departmental Liaison Officer
Office of the Hon Paul Fletcher MP
Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts

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:Sensitive

s47F

From: s47F
Sent: Tuesday, 13 April 2021 10:08 AM
To: s47F
Subject: RE: MC21-001581 - Copy of correspondence from Minister Fletcher to the Hon Kevin Rudd AC [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Thanks s47F

s47F | Senior Adviser

s47F

From: s47F
Sent: Tuesday, 13 April 2021 10:04 AM
To: s47F
Subject: FW: MC21-001581 - Copy of correspondence from Minister Fletcher to the Hon Kevin Rudd AC [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

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

OFFICIAL

From: DLO <s47E(d)>
Sent: Tuesday, 13 April 2021 10:01 AM
To: s47E(d)
Cc: DLO <s47E(d)>; s47F
Subject: MC21-001581 - Copy of correspondence from Minister Fletcher to the Hon Kevin Rudd AC [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Good morning

Please find attached a copy of correspondence from Minister Fletcher to the Hon Kevin Rudd AC.

No hard copy will follow.

Regards

s47F

Senior Departmental Liaison Officer
Office of the Hon Paul Fletcher MP
Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts

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.

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PAUL FLETCHER MP

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

MC21-001581

The Hon Kevin Rudd AC
GPO Box 228
Brisbane QLD 4001

Dear Mr Rudd

Kevin

I refer to your letter of 20 November 2020 to the Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP, regarding Petition EN1938 which calls for a Royal Commission to ensure a strong, diverse news media to underpin the future of Australia's democracy. Your letter has been forwarded to me for reply as I have portfolio responsibility for this matter.

This petition was considered by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Petitions and presented in the House of Representatives on 9 November 2020. In line with its usual practice, the Committee referred the petition to me as the relevant portfolio Minister for advice. On 30 January 2021, I provided my written response to the Chair of the Committee indicating that 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 and recognises that quality news and public interest journalism play an important role in the functioning of Australian society and democracy.

As you would be aware, 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.

In addition to ownership restrictions, the diversity and sustainability of news media is also contingent on financial viability. The Government recognises that media companies have been facing challenging market conditions with declining circulation/audience numbers and difficult advertising conditions. The sharp downturn in advertising revenue across the sector due to the COVID-19 pandemic significantly increased those challenges.

The Government acted decisively in the national interest to implement a range of measures to help Australian media businesses during COVID-19, including:

- **Investing in regional journalism** – A \$55 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 for the program. In addition, the Government has provided \$5 million to the Australian Associated Press Limited Newswire under the program.
- **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 of spectrum tax for commercial television and radio broadcasters worth \$41 million.

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 Government welcomes an open dialogue with stakeholders during the consultation period, which closes 23 May 2021.

Further, on 25 February 2021, the Government secured passage of the Treasury Laws Amendment (News Media and Digital Platforms Mandatory Bargaining Code) Bill 2020 (the News Media Bargaining Code) through Parliament. The News Media Bargaining Code is world leading regulatory reform to address the bargaining power imbalances between large digital platforms and Australian news businesses over critical issues, including remuneration.

While we do not support your calls for a Royal Commission, the Government is actively engaged in ensuring the sustainability of a strong and diverse media sector through those actions we have taken.

I have copied the Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP, into this correspondence.

Yours sincerely



Paul Fletcher

10/4/2021

s47F

From: s47F
Sent: Monday, 31 May 2021 2:25 PM
To: s47F
Cc: Bloxsom, Ryan
Subject: RE: Community TV [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Thanks so much s47F and yes it was good to meet you too! This is very helpful and if I speak to these folk will be of great assistance.

All the best

s47F

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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

From: s47F
Sent: Friday, May 21, 2021 3:56 PM
To: s47F
Cc: Bloxsom, Ryan <Ryan.Bloxsom@communications.gov.au>
Subject: Community TV [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Dear s47F

s47F

s47C

I hope this background is of use to you and please let me know if you require anything further.

Kind regards

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 | s47F

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