

Senator the Hon Sarah Henderson
Shadow Minister for Communications
Senator for Victoria
By email: senator.henderson@aph.gov.au

ACMA file reference: BM-11801

Dear Senator Henderson

AM broadcast on ABC Radio National on 31 January 2023

Thank you for your email of 5 February 2023, about the ABC's coverage of a community meeting in Alice Springs (the meeting), particularly a report broadcast on the ABC's AM program at approximately 7.10 am on 31 January 2023 (the AM report).

On 10 February 2023, the ACMA requested further information from the ABC Ombudsman, including copies of reports about the meeting on ABC Radio and TV, advice about steps the ABC had taken following its reporting on the meeting, and whether the Ombudsman was investigating the matter with a view to determining whether the ABC's reporting was consistent with the ABC Code of Practice.

On 19 February 2023, the ABC Ombudsman provided the requested information and broadcasts, and referred to the [Ombudsman's investigation](#) of the AM report. The investigation found that the AM report breached impartiality standard 4.5 of its Code by unduly favouring one perspective over another and breached accuracy standard 2.1 of its Code by not making reasonable efforts to ensure that material facts were accurately presented in context. The report includes a recommendation that an editor's note and correction to the AM Report, previously published on the ABC website, be updated to reflect the Ombudsman's accuracy and impartiality breach findings. The findings have been accepted and the recommendation has been implemented by the ABC.

The ACMA has carefully considered the AM report, as well as a range of other broadcasts that covered the meeting, the ABC Ombudsman's investigation report, and the actions taken by the ABC. The ACMA considers that the Ombudsman has assessed the same matters that the ACMA would consider in an investigation of its own. The Ombudsman has specifically and publicly stated that these were breaches of the ABC's Code, which the ABC has accepted. We also consider that the ABC has taken actions which would likely have been suggested by the ACMA in response to the breach findings.

Given these outcomes, the ACMA does not intend to further investigate this matter.

However, the ACMA has requested that the ABC keep it informed about the outcome of any further internal investigation conducted by the ABC about the circumstances attaching to this matter (including any changes to its editorial processes) and any additional steps that may be taken by the ABC as a result.

Thank you for raising your concerns regarding the ABC's coverage with the ACMA.

Yours faithfully



Nerida O'Loughlin PSM

26 March 2023