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## **MEDIA RELEASE: REGIONAL BROADCASTERS WELCOME MEDIA REFORM**

**Sydney, 1 March 2016:**

Regional broadcasters welcome the announcement today by Minister Fifield that the Government will be introducing legislation to reform the media ownership laws to abolish the '75% reach rule', which prevents a broadcaster from reaching more than 75% of the Australian population and the 'two out of three rule', which limits ownership to two out of three of a printed newspaper, radio and free to air television licence.

Welcoming the announcement, **John Hartigan, Chairman of Prime Media said,**

"Abolition of the out-dated media laws demonstrates the Turnbull Government's commitment to television viewers in regional and rural Australia.

"The Prime Minister and Minister Fifield engaged deeply on these issues, and have demonstrated they have the fortitude to follow through."

**Grant Blackley, CEO of Southern Cross Austereo said,**

"I congratulate Minister Fifield, who, after extensive consultation, has announced a far reaching package, which paves the way for meaningful media reform.

"We encourage all Members and Senators to embrace these reforms and support a swift passage through both houses of Parliament. It's time for the rules to reflect media in the 21<sup>st</sup> century."

**Ian Audsley, CEO of Prime Media said,**

"I would like to thank Tim Fischer and the thousands of regional Australians who backed our 'Save Our Voices' campaign.

"The Minister's reform package will enable regional media businesses to achieve the necessary scale to determine their own future and start to reduce their dependency on others."

**Andrew Lancaster, CEO of WIN Corporation said,**

"Regional Members and Senators have opened their doors, listened and taken the time to understand the complex issues facing regional broadcasters and the impact on viewers.

"The '75% reach rule' makes absolutely no sense at a time when news, information and entertainment services are now being delivered via a diverse range of technologies and from a plethora of sources, rendering it and the 'two out of three rule' blunt instruments.



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In accepting new local content obligations as part of the reform package, **Mr Lancaster said,**

“The new local content obligations strike a sensible balance between ensuring reasonable levels of local content are maintained upon the merger of a regional and metro broadcaster, while ensuring local news services remain financially viable in the meantime.”

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