

Australian Media Landscape Report

Burnout in Australian Journalism: The Human Cost of the News Cycle



Amrita Sidhu

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Our journalists are struggling.

Burnout

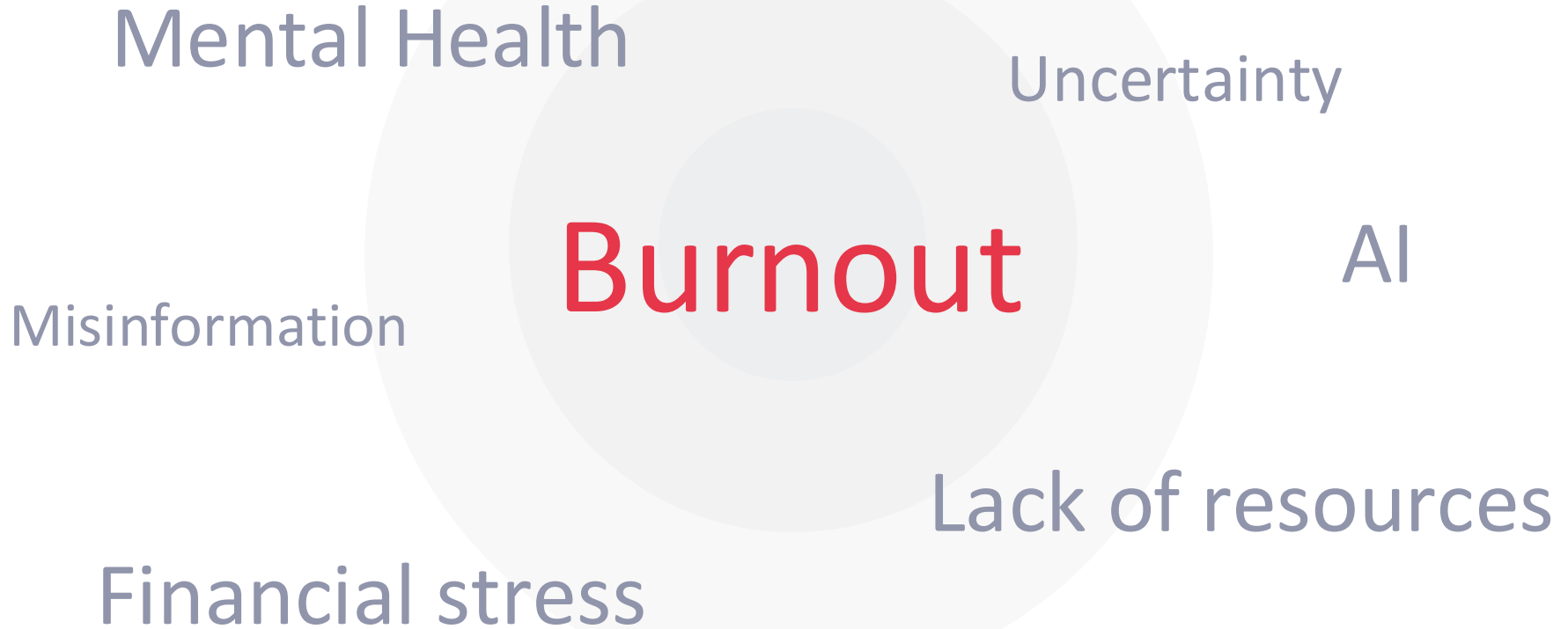
72%

of journalists had experienced
burnout in their work in 2023

“

I had a nervous
breakdown after covering
a murder.

— Journalist respondent, Media Landscape Report 2023



Journalists' greatest challenges.

2020: Lack of peer contact
2021: Mental health
2022: Money
2023: Money
2024: Money

41%

Top challenges (year)

39%

of journalists pointed out **mental health** as their greatest challenge in 2021.

Journalists feel undervalued.



67%

67% of respondents felt they were **underpaid** in 2024.

84%

of journalists said they did at least an hour or two of unpaid work every week (2022).

“

Anyone seeking to work in journalism is either (a) not interested in the money or (b) stupid.

— Journalist respondent, Media Landscape Report 2025

“

I had to find extra ways to make money to be happy with my life because I don't want to stop being a journalist.

— Journalist respondent, Media Landscape Report 2025

m.

ANSWER
AI and Trump

ANSWER
The ability to be factually accurate. Verification and peer-reviewed articles seem to carry more credibility.

ANSWER
Journalism is real, value-adding work. Any idiot can post about what's happening. Journalism adds context and depth, or explains or makes relevant.

“

What will define journalism and the media in 2025?

ANSWER
A journalist is still someone that adheres to the Code of Ethics and has specific skills and experience in researching and creating fact-based storytelling that serves the public interest. Everything else should be termed 'content creation'.

ANSWER
Organisations should not be able to call themselves media outlets if they use AI for writing stories.

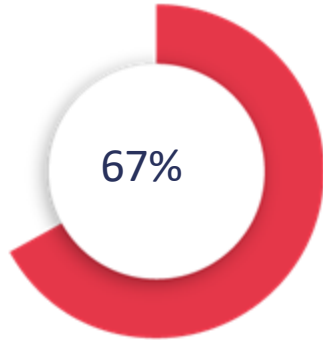
ANSWER
Transparency. Integrity. Rigour. Expertise. Tenacity. Courage. Style.

ANSWER
Accuracy – even the slightest mistakes or ambiguities in reporting will be used to demonise the media as 'fake news'.

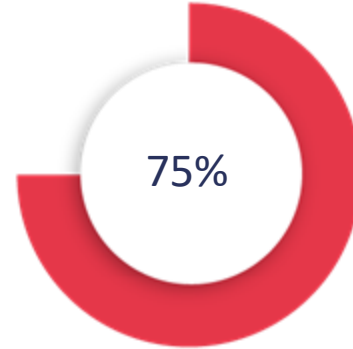
ANSWER
The internet

ANSWER
TikTok

Most respondents said they believed trust in the media **has declined.**

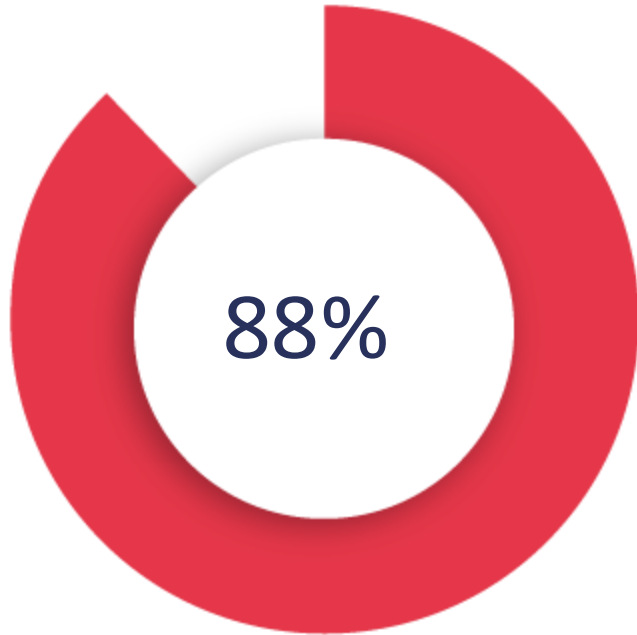


Respondents believe social media **negatively impacts** the media by causing misinformation and echo chambers, rather than providing opportunities for diverse perspectives



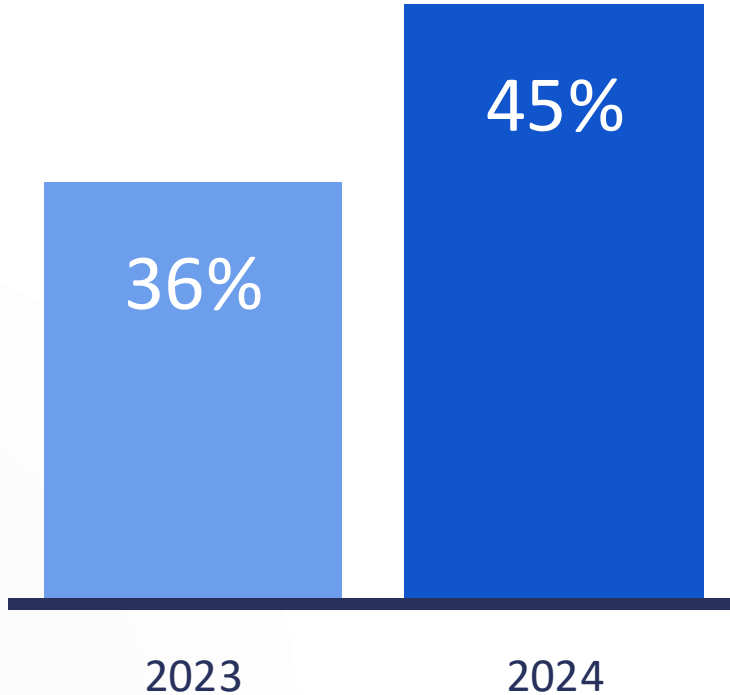
Journalists said an increase of **disinformation** or **fake news** threatened public interest journalism in 2024

Generative AI is causing **concern.**



Most respondents said they were **concerned about the impacts that generative AI/LLMs could have on the overall integrity or quality of journalism**

(compared to 79% in 2023)



45%

of respondents
view AI/LLMs as a
**threat to public
interest journalism**

*(an increase from 36% in
2023)*

AI as a threat to public interest journalism according to respondents.

“

In every media role I've had I've covered more than one role. I actually developed a stress-related endocrine disorder as a result of the intense pressure and extreme workflow.

— Journalist respondent, Media Landscape Report 2023

“

People don't understand the significant mental toll the work takes... The trauma you absorb on the job is difficult to deal with. It's exacerbated by insecure work.

— Journalist respondent, Media Landscape Report 2023

Download the report.



-> www.medianet.com.au/2025-media-landscape-report

Let's connect.



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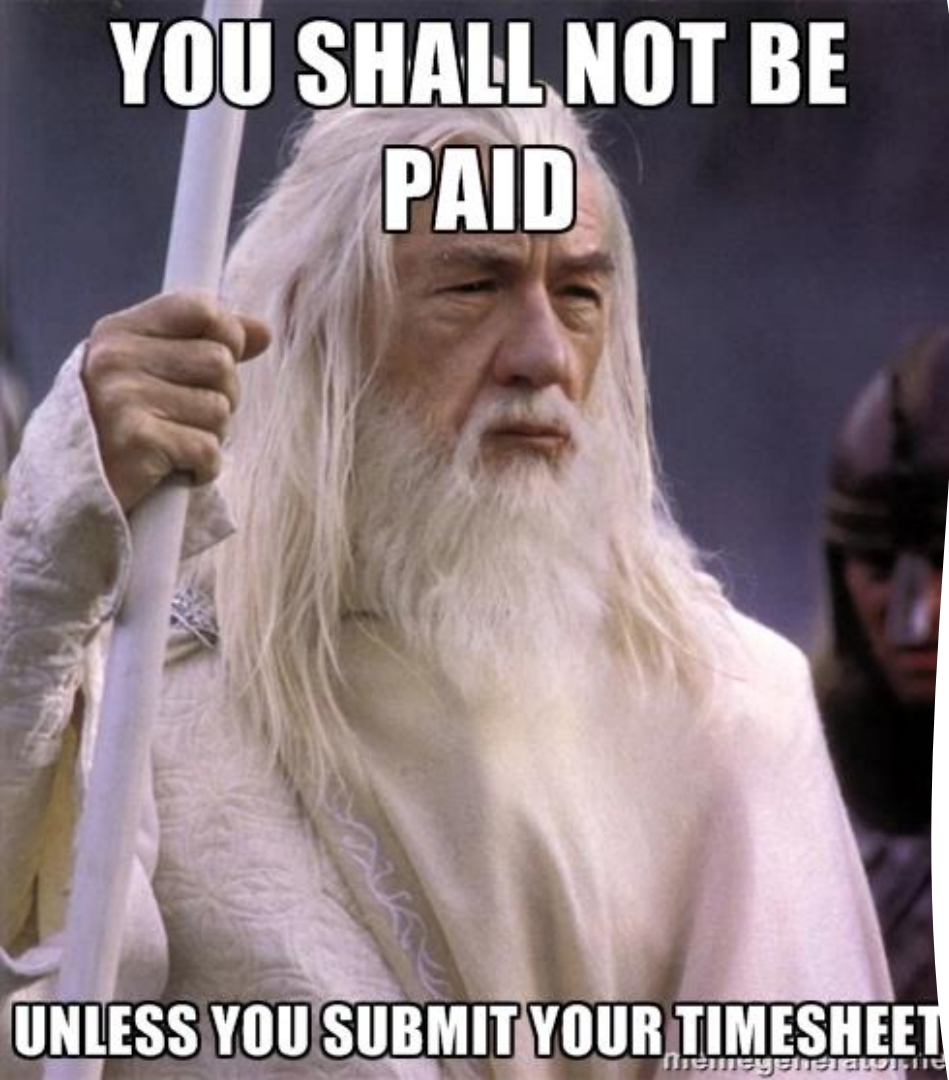
‘No time to think’: Time poverty in the newsroom and how to combat it

Dr Caroline James-Garrod

LINA Annual Summit 2025

Melbourne Connect, Parkville – 3 April





The research topic:
Time poverty + mobile
tech + digital journalists +
ethics

- Who?
- What?
- Where?
- When?
- How?
- Why?

**How many working
Australian
journalists have
been time poor?**





What does this look like in
the words of suffering
journalists?

“No time to think”

“It is forgetting to eat or drink because I am too busy”

“Having little time to connect with people/sources and general human beings in person because of the time it takes to get places and ... in face-to-face meetings I cannot be sneakily multitasking”

“Not enough time to be present”

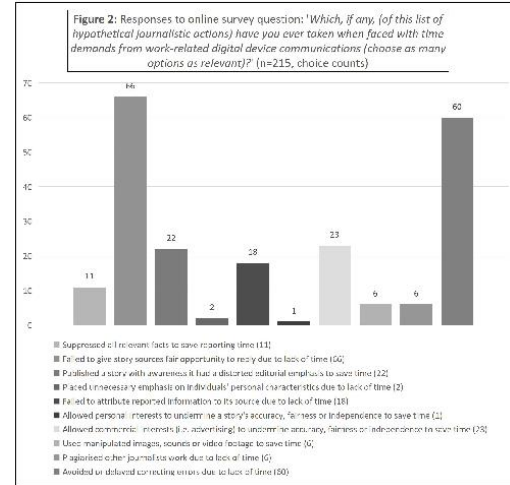


“Trying to fit a square puzzle piece into a round hole ”


“(Being time poor is) badly managing time [...] letting commitments and duties sneak up on you”

“No time to meet friends or my *[sic]* partner for social obligations. Letting down family”

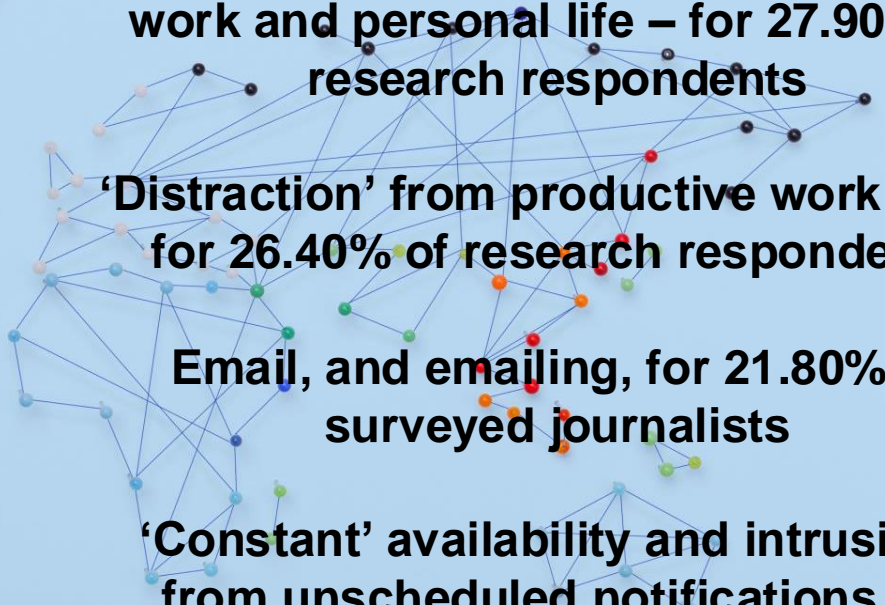
Cyber time poverty is suffered when responsible to others via mobile online smart devices beyond reasonable work hours



What does
cyber time
poverty look
like in
practice of
journalism?



‘Time (wastage), lack of downtime, ‘no time to think’, ‘blurred time’ between work and personal life – for 27.90% of research respondents



‘Distraction’ from productive work tasks for 26.40% of research respondents

Email, and emailing, for 21.80% of surveyed journalists

‘Constant’ availability and intrusions from unscheduled notifications for 17.80% of study journalists



Journalist time poverty burnout: **Recommended responses**



Top 5 Combat Tips

- **Review ‘reasonable’ after hours’ contact**, regularly
- Set **‘on’ and ‘off’ smartphone time** – and **stick to it**
- **Take mini-breaks** – 5 minutes’ unstructured rest every 25 minutes boosts attention (University of Sydney study 2023)
- Australia’s new **Right to Disconnect** (Fair Work Act 2009 amendment) applies to small businesses **from 26 August 2025**
- **Support peers and co-workers** – nobody should live in a state of chronic time poverty, and speaking its name is the first step

Thank you
for your
time

