

The Honourable David Crisafulli
1 William Street
Brisbane QLD 4000

Thursday 12 June 2025

Dear Premier,

I write on behalf of the Local & Independent News Association (LINA), Australia's industry association for local and independent digital newsrooms. LINA represents a diverse and growing network of news publishers, including 12 in Queensland, that provide vital public interest journalism to the communities they serve.

LINA commends the Queensland Government's recent announcement committing a minimum of 75 per cent of press advertising placements to rural and regional newspapers. This policy reflects a welcome recognition of the importance of local journalism in informing and connecting communities, and strengthening community resilience, trust, and civic engagement.

However, to fully realise the intent of this commitment, LINA urges the Government to expand its scope to include digital news publications.

Local journalism no longer exists solely on printed pages. Regional newsrooms today are multiplatform by necessity, with many community publishers reaching their audiences through websites, newsletters, social media, and mobile apps. In fact, for many residents—particularly younger Queenslanders and those in remote areas—digital is the primary means of accessing timely, trusted local news. All LINA publishers are also members of the Australia Press Council and are committed to upholding its Principles and Standards of Practice, along with [LINA's editorial and organisational requirements](#) for independence and quality.

Importantly, this broader, future-focused approach is consistent with the principles outlined in the Commonwealth government's News Media Assistance Program (News MAP) 2024 framework. As the framework advises:

"Journalism policy should generally be neutral about the distribution method... Australians are able to access news content through a broad range of distribution technologies—print newspapers, radio, television, digital publications and online services like podcasts and social media... government interventions should not generally be targeted to a specific distribution technology..." and
"Promote diversity and competition, and respond to changing conditions... Policy interventions should not seek to fix or revert things to a point in time, entrench incumbents, or fail to pragmatically engage with changes in technology."

Excluding digital channels from the mandatory allocation risks inadvertently privileging legacy formats over innovation, contrary to these guidelines. It also narrows the reach and effectiveness of government messaging—particularly during natural disasters and emergencies, where digital platforms often provide real-time updates when print delivery may be delayed.

Including digital news platforms in the 75 per cent advertising requirement would:

- Reflect how regional audiences actually consume news today;
- Strengthen the financial sustainability of local journalism in both print and digital forms;
- Support innovation, reach underserved demographics, and build media diversity;
- Facilitate immediate calls to action from readers, directing new traffic to government websites and services;
- Provide easy access to immediately change messaging if needed;
- Ensure government communications are both effective and equitable across all formats, especially during emergencies.

LINA would welcome the opportunity to connect Queensland Government media agents with professional digital news services in Queensland.

The Queensland Government has long demonstrated its support for public interest journalism. Expanding the advertising policy to include digital platforms would ensure that this support is responsive to the realities of a modern media landscape and aligned with best-practice policy principles.

Thank you for your continued leadership in supporting regional media. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further and contribute to the development of a policy that fully supports the breadth of local journalism in Queensland.

Sincerely,



Claire Stuchbery
Executive Director