

Opening remarks  
Chris Cheah, Acting Deputy Chair  
Australian Communications and Media Authority

Submission No: 2

Good Morning,

As we said in our response to the ANAO, ACMA welcomes the audit of our commercial broadcasting activities. As a relatively new organisation, ACMA is very conscious of the benefits of independently reviewing process and procedures so that they continue to meet the expectations of the government, industry and community.

In contrast, we welcomed the ANAO finding that ACMA has adequately addressed the majority of broadcasting complaints it has received.

ACMA also acknowledges that there are areas where our management of commercial broadcasting investigations can be improved.

In particular, ACMA considers it critical to the co-regulatory approach that consumer complaints are dealt with effectively by broadcasters and by ACMA where complaints are escalated.

As such, ACMA has formerly accepted each of the five ANAO recommendations and our recently formed SES2 'Compliance and Enforcement Committee' has been charged with overseeing their implementation.

I would like to inform the committee that implementation progress is being reported directly to the ACMA chair on a daily basis. My colleagues stand ready to provide more details on the specific responses to each recommendation.

In many areas, this work constitutes a continuation of activities that started prior to the ANAO audit. ACMA first started to develop new approaches to its broader investigation functions following an independent review that we commissioned ourselves in the middle of 2007. Our Compliance and Enforcement Committee, for example, was established in direct response to this 2007 review. Our current work on an investigations procedure manual also originated with this 2007 report.

Recent improvements to our broadcasting investigations processes have also included the implementation of an 'expedited investigation' approach to facilitate the faster resolution of routine or straightforward investigations. ACMA has also implemented a 'statement of issues' approach to better focus the parties on matters of significance, thereby improving both our efficiency and timeliness.