

16 February 2000



Pulteney Court
Adelaide SA 5000

Tel : 61 8 8418 5101
Fax: 61 8 8418 5197

The Hon. Paul Neville MP
Chairman
Standing Committee on Communications,
Transport and the Arts
C/- Ms Janette Holmes
Secretariat
Department of Communications,
Information Technology and the Arts
Fax: (02) 6277 2067

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communications, Transport and the Arts	
Submission No:	106-3
Date Received:	19/2/01
Secretary:	Janet Holmes

Dear Mr Neville

I refer to my open letter of 6 February 2001.

In that letter we identify and deal in a general way with certain "vested interests".

One of those vested interests is "Port Macquarie Country Labor".

We have now obtained a copy of the transcript of the public hearing in Townsville.

Mr Hardgrave commented at the public hearing that "I do not believe that the Port Macquarie Labor Party branch is necessarily a vested interest against you, but they are very critical of you".

We do not agree that they are not a vested interest against us and, in my view, it is now appropriate that we respond on the specific point made by Mr Hardgrave.

We understand that one of the primary contributors to the submission made by Port Macquarie Country Labor was Jeff Condron. We also understand that he is a senior member of that organisation.

Mr Condron worked at many radio stations over many years leading up to 1986. He was in fact the general manager of 2MC Port Macquarie between 1978 and when his employment was terminated in 1986.

We understand that he has not found permanent employment in the industry since then.

2MC Port Macquarie is now owned by us (although we acquired it more than a decade after these events).

Mr Hardgrave would not be aware of the foregoing (nor should he or any other member of your committee be expected to be so). It is only through our own intimate knowledge of the market that we are aware of these events.

In these circumstances we do not agree that the submission made by Port Macquarie Country Labor was untainted by vested interests or otherwise free of bias against DMG.

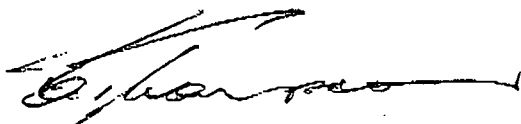
Rather, it is clear to us that their submission is in fact tainted as a result of the significant influence of a disgruntled former industry employee (and in particular a former general manager of one of our stations who was disaffected when his employment was terminated).

We should also point out that Mr Condron featured prominently in a later story in the Port News on 2 February 2001. That story repeated many of the incorrect assertions which were contained in the submission made by Port Macquarie Country Labor.

This is just another example in support of our strong contention that your committee should focus on the opinions of rank and file audiences and should disregard the opinions of those who have vested interests.

Please let me know if you would like us to explain in more detail the circumstances behind any of the other "vested interests" identified in my letter of 6 February 2001.

Yours sincerely,



PAUL THOMPSON
Chief Executive