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Radio welcomes Government relief measures but says more action needed

Peak industry body Commercial Radio Australia has welcomed the Federal Government's relief package for Australian media, but said much more action was needed to address the severity of the impact of COVID-19 on radio broadcasters.

CRA chief executive officer Joan Warner welcomed the Minister's announcement of a waiver of spectrum taxes for 12 months and the announcement of the new \$50 million Public Interest News Gathering program.

"We welcome the move to waive spectrum fees but the measures announced today do not go far enough in addressing the pressures facing the radio industry.

"We are grateful for the one-year waiver of spectrum taxes which amounts to about \$1.2 million for radio, spread across the large number of networks and stations.

"However, we are disappointed that commercial radio, as the most hyper local of the mediums, has been largely overlooked in spite of its continued delivery of service to the Australian community during the pandemic, and before that, during the bushfires and the drought.

"Radio is an essential service and it's vital that we are able to continue to meet local content and emergency broadcasting obligations.

"We have now opened discussions directly with the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) to discuss urgent action to reduce red tape and create a fairer playing field for Australian radio broadcasters so we can keep meeting our obligations to listeners and the communities we serve.

"We would also like to see not just video content harmonised across local services and global giants but the delivery of Australian music requirements also harmonised across radio and global music streaming services such as Spotify."

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