COMMERCIAL RADIO AUSTRALIA

MEDIA RELEASE

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Commercial radio industry welcomes new Communications Minister

The commercial radio industry today welcomed the appointment of Paul Fletcher as the new Federal Minister for Communications, Cybersafety and the Arts in the Morrison Government.

Joan Warner, the chief executive officer of peak industry body Commercial Radio Australia, said: "The industry congratulates Minister Fletcher on his appointment. We enjoyed working with the new Minister when he was the Parliamentary Secretary to Malcolm Turnbull in 2015 and look forward to working closely with him once again."

Mr Fletcher was previously Minister for Families and Social Services. In his career he has served as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Communications, held a senior executive role at Optus, established a consulting firm serving the communications sector and has written a book about broadband.

Ms Warner said: "Australian radio reaches 95% of the population and plays an essential role in providing local news, information and entertainment.

"Local broadcasters, particularly those serving listeners in regional areas, need to be able to compete on a more level playing field with the global digital giants, who are largely unregulated and pay little tax in this country.

"We will be looking to meet soon with Minister Fletcher to discuss a broad range of policy issues impacting on commercial radio including the regulatory inequalities that exist between commercial radio and the digital platforms.

"This includes the removal of the outdated election advertising blackout rule, stronger protections for the removal of copyright infringing material and other issues outlined in the ACCC inquiry."

Ms Warner said the industry would also continue discussions over government support to enable regional broadcasters to transition to digital broadcasting.

She thanked the outgoing Communications Minister, Mitch Fifield, for his landmark work in reforming media ownership rules and cutting radio licence fees.

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