

## **Private Members Statement**

### **Multicultural Media**

Speaker, I rise today to recognise the importance of our multicultural media to our state, and our local communities.

Speaker, as many in this House know we rely on the media each and everyday to inform, educate and enlighten us – the media is for many of us our first port of call to learn about developing stories which impact our daily lives.

The media, often noted as the fourth estate, wields immense power in our society possessing the explicit capacity to influence, inform and advocate. In a country like ours a free, open and unbiased press is a central pillar of our democracy - as it is through the media that social, legislative and cultural change can occur.

Speaker, it is in this sentiment that I wanted to highlight the importance of multicultural media to our diverse, vibrant and thriving society. Engaging in multicultural media is something that we can all do better and the Coalition has a strong track record of this.

As a Member of Parliament, the former Minister for Multiculturalism and now as Shadow Minister, I have always tried to make a concerted effort to ensure that multicultural media outlets are treated with the respect they deserve, reflecting the high standard in which they are held by our many multicultural communities.

Multicultural media played a crucial role during the pandemic in providing information to communities across the state in a challenging time.

Speaker, the pandemic provided one of the greatest challenges for the media as a whole, as the fast-changing health advice along with the rise of misinformation created a significant degree of confusion and uncertainty in the community.

But throughout it all, many in our community, particularly those with little to no English, relied on accurate and targeted information to ensure that their lives and livelihoods were protected from the impacts of the pandemic.

Speaker, I am proud of the Coalition's track record of supporting multicultural media in our state and during our time in Government I was proud to support a number of initiatives to help multicultural media, including:

- New funding for language services that ensures that all key government announcements can be translated and shared with multicultural media.
- A requirement for council partnership grants to allocate 10% of promotional budgets to advertising with multicultural media.
- Frequent briefings with multicultural media in conjunction with NSW Health, ensuring health advice was providing in a timely and consistent manner.
- I also conducted regular interviews with multicultural media, ensuring our diverse communities were kept up to date with our priorities and initiatives designed to make their lives better.
- We also advocated across Government for agencies to increase their engagement with multicultural communities – utilising the immense reach and power of multicultural media outlets to do so.
- We also hosted the annual Premier's Multicultural Communications Awards to recognise excellence in the multicultural media industry, which I must say is a fantastic evening.

Speaker, engaging with our multicultural media outlets isn't just about adding their emails to a distribution list. It is about ensuring that we partake in media and non-media communication activities, making sure we deliver information to the platforms and mediums that our multicultural communities use most.

Multicultural media plays such a critical role in our communities, connecting people to their culture, identity and language whilst also keeping them informed on important messages.

The NSW Liberals and Nationals are committed to further increasing our engagement with multicultural media outlets. We believe that to truly connect with everyone in this state, we must go to them, not make them come to us.

Engaging with multicultural media is crucial to increasing our cultural understanding of the many vibrant communities which make up our great state.

Multicultural media provides us with on-the-ground insights into the important issues facing the state's diverse communities. They play a crucial role in advocating for their communities to all levels of Government, giving us in this place the ability to tailor services to community needs.

Speaker, on behalf of the NSW Liberals and Nationals – I want to express our deepest thanks and appreciation to the many multicultural media outlets which serve our state, and say to them, my door is always open and I am committed to continuing our great work together.

Thank you.

**Mark Coure MP**

Member for Oatley

Shadow Minister for Multiculturalism

Delivered to the NSW Legislative Assembly on 23 August 2023.