



Australian Federation of Deaf Societies Inc.

ABN: 16 804 096 174

Postal address:

PO Box 1060

Parramatta NSW 2124

Tel: 02 9893 8555

POSITION AND COMMENT
FOR IMMEDIATE USE

The Australian Federation of Deaf Societies strongly urges the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission to reject the application for an extension by the TV networks to provide immunity from the Disability Discrimination Act with regards to captioning requirements.

The regulations for television captioning have been in existence with the Broadcasting Services Act (1992), and the multiple-stage agreement to increase captioning has been agreed to by the television networks.

AFDS acknowledges previous efforts made to increase captioning, however it sees an extension to the immunity as unjustified. The level of captioning provided by Australian networks is significantly lower than other countries such as the United States and Britain, and as such, AFDS stands by the regulations already in place to increase captioning.

AFDS sees the application for extension as unwarranted, and will be submitting to HREOC with advice to reject the application.

The captioning agreement is in place to increase access for Deaf persons throughout Australia – AFDS feels that through this extension application, the networks are avoiding their agreement and responsibility to the Australian Deaf community.

ENDS

Alex Chapman
Policy & Strategy Coordinator
Australian Federation of Deaf Societies
(02) 8833-3667
E: afds@deafsociety.com