

We were very upset at the recent police raid on the ABC and seizing of journalist scripts and notes as well as the raid on the home of a NewsCorp journalist. We express our support and concern for all journalists in Australia. The police action, and others like it, strike at the heart of democracy by threatening media freedom. We feel that media freedom is critical to our democracy.

The threat of imprisonment of journalists and their sources for disclosing information in the public interest is completely unacceptable. So too is the action of police in raiding the ABC in such a manner and in confiscating such a wide range of journalistic material. All documents seized during this raid remain ABC property and should be returned without altercation or delay.

*We believe that legislation enabling this raid should be immediately repealed. In particular, **police should have no right to delete or alter a publisher's document.** The public interest must be paramount. We call on the Federal Parliament to pass legislation to protect the rights of whistle-blowers and the media, and to prevent this kind of intimidation.*

We also call on the Australian Federal Police to adopt an interim protocol to protect journalistic freedom and integrity within the current law.

*Freedom of expression and the media are fundamental pillars of democracy. They should be a constitutional right for all Australians. David Kaye, the U.N Rapporteur asked by the Human rights Council to monitor press freedom has named Australia as being a democratic country that is neglecting its responsibilities by allowing police to treat journalists as criminals with recent raids on a News Corp journalists home as well as the ABC. We agree with him and urge the committee to ensure the freedom of our media in Australia.
Yours sincerely, Jenni and John Pass [REDACTED]*