

## Television Licence Fees Amendment Bill 2013

*Introduced into the House of Representatives on 14 March 2013*

*Portfolio: Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy*

1.98 This bill form part of a package of measures<sup>48</sup> which represent the government's response to two reviews conducted in 2011 and 2012 – the Convergence Review and the Independent Inquiry into the Media and Media Regulation. This bill responds to matters raised in the Convergence Review.

1.99 This bill seeks to amend the *Television Licence Fees Act 1964* to reduce the annual licence fee payable by commercial television broadcasting licences by 50 per cent. It sets out how the licence fee is to be calculated by inserting a new sliding scale of licence fees. This 50 per cent reduction in fees is currently provided for in the *Television Licence Fees Regulations 1990*. This bill seeks to replace these temporary rebates by providing for a permanent reduction in fees.

### Compatibility with human rights

1.100 The bill is accompanied by a self-contained statement of compatibility which states that no rights are engaged by the bill, and which notes:

This measure will increase regulatory certainty for the industry and enable broadcasters to continue to support the production of Australian content in an increasingly challenging operating environment.<sup>49</sup>

1.101 The bill may therefore promote the right to participate in cultural life in article 15(1)(a) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the right to freedom of expression in article 19 of the ICCPR.

**1.102 The committee considers that the bill does not give rise to issues of incompatibility with human rights.**

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48 There are six bills that form this package namely: the Broadcasting Legislation Amendment (Convergence Review and Other Measures) Bill 2013; the Broadcasting Legislation Amendment (News Media Diversity) Bill 2013; the Television Licence Fees Amendment Bill 2013; the News Media (Self-regulation) Bill 2013; the News Media (Self-regulation) (Consequential Amendments) Bill 2013; and the Public Interest Media Advocate Bill 2013.

49 Statement of compatibility, p 2.