



**Chair**  
Prof David Weisbrot AM FAAL DLitt  
**Executive Director**  
John Pender

5 May 2017

Coroner Audrey Jamieson  
Coroners Court of Victoria  
65 Kavanagh Street,  
Southbank VIC 3006

Dear Coroner Jamieson

I write in regard to your recent ruling in which you refer to a Chanel Nine journalist having had a series of telephone conversations with a gunman with whom police were trying to negotiate during a siege situation in March 2013.

Your findings were extremely interesting and cast light upon a significant issue in contemporary journalism.

I note that you refer in your ruling to the need for the Australian Press Council to consider reviewing its General Principles in light of what transpired during that incident. We are always happy to receive such suggestions and regularly review our Standards of Practice, which include the General Principles, Specific Standards and Advisory Guidelines. I will certainly discuss this further with my colleagues at the Press Council and also raise it with the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA), particularly since this incident involved a TV journalist and network.

The Australian Press Council is the principal body with responsibility for responding to complaints about Australian newspapers, magazines and online news outlets. The Press Council is also responsible for promoting good standards of media practice, and advocating for freedom of the press, free speech and freedom of information.

As you may be aware, the Press Council's remit does not extend to broadcasting — that is, to television and radio stations, which require a federal license to operate. A review of the sort you are referring to would in this case be something for ACMA to consider. It might also be something for the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance (MEAA) — the union to which most journalists belong, and which maintains a Code of Practice — and/or individual broadcasters via their own codes of journalism/employee practice.

However, as print journalists could also be caught in the circumstances you describe in your ruling, this is a matter that the Press Council will consider as we review our own Standards of Practice.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Weisbrot', is located below the typed name.