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## **Reverse cut to WA regional allowance**

ABC management should reconsider its decision to slash the regional allowance for journalists based in remote areas of Western Australia.

At a time when dozens of staff are being made redundant and journalists are working hard to keep their communities informed about coronavirus developments, the decision is callous and insensitive, the Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance says.

MEAA acting Media section director Adam Portelli said the decision represented an effective pay cut of up to \$15,000 for some journalists. It will impact 37 ABC staff based at Broome, Kununurra, Geraldton, Kalgoorlie, and Esperance.

“At the same time that more than 150 workers at the ABC are losing their jobs, this is another kick in the guts for staff,” Mr Portelli said.

“This is appalling timing when the ABC has pledged to focus more on regional and rural Australia and less on the eastern seaboard and will make it harder for journalists to relocate to remote parts of the country.

“The real blame for this decision is the hundreds of millions of dollars that has been cut from the ABC’s budget by the Federal Government.”

MEAA WA regional director Tiffany Venning said journalists had not been consulted about the cut.

“Management claims that the reason for the cut is cheaper housing in mining regions of WA, but it is not just housing costs that are inflated in these areas,” she said.

“To the journalists affected, this feels like meanspirited penny-pinching and it will have a real impact on their ability to pay bills.”

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