

POLICY – POLITICAL CONTENT MATTER

RATIONALE

The main purpose of Eastern Community Broadcasters Inc. hereafter referred to as Radio Eastern fm is to provide a service to the community, through entertainment, by providing information, encouraging participation in community activities, and by building community spirit through the promotion on radio of community organisations and events.

Radio Eastern fm encourages participation from community members in a range of ways. This may include community leaders approaching the station such as members of parliament within the broadcasting area from time to time. The regulation of station content in relation to political content is covered by the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* (BSA).

The provisions in the BSA relating to the broadcast of political matter apply at all times.

Election matter and election advertisements are specific forms of political matter that relate directly to an election to a parliament or a local government authority of a state or territory. During election campaigns, the BSA places some restrictions on the broadcast of election advertising. It also places certain obligations on licensees to provide access to the licensee's broadcasting service to participants contesting the election.

For this reason and given the vastness of the broadcast area and the number of electoral districts, it is impractical to provide equal time to all members of parliament and ultimately candidates for election.

Accordingly, the station aims to broadcast content that is apolitical in nature and involvement of local members of parliament should be strictly limited to community information as determined by the associated Procedure.

Policy.

1. No member of parliament (or candidate for such office) will be provided with a permanent programme at Radio Eastern fm.
2. The Duty Presenter may invite a member of parliament for an interview or to contribute material "on air" on an ad-hoc basis ensuring that the information is strictly of community interest and apolitical in nature.
3. Radio Eastern fm reserves the right to deny access to a member of parliament going "to air" during the period of a formal election campaign as prescribed by the relevant jurisdiction (State or Federal issuance of electoral writs) precluding a candidate from going to air within the 33 days prior to an election date.
4. This policy does not preclude a member of parliament (or candidate) from sponsoring Radio Eastern fm subject to the conditions prescribed below.

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT (OR CANDIDATE) SPONSORSHIP

In accordance with Radio Eastern fm sponsorship policies, and in compliance with the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* (subsection 321D(7)), and the requirements in clause 10 of the *Commonwealth Electoral (Authorisation of Voter Communication) Determination 2018* (the Commonwealth Electoral Determination), any such sponsorship message must include a clear statement in addition to station requirements "Authorised by (Name and address of authoriser), spoken by (name of persons within the message)."

This Policy is supported by the Political Content Matter Procedures: