

5 May 2022

The Secretariat
News Media and Digital Platforms
Mandatory Bargaining Code Review
Market Conduct Division

NMDPbargainingcodereview@treasury.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam

Solstice Media is a national digital news publisher with its head office based in Adelaide. The company operates in Melbourne, Adelaide and Brisbane and employs over 100 staff and contributors.

It produces public interest journalism for its news websites InDaily and CityMag in South Australia, InQueensland and The Weekend Edition in Queensland and The New Daily, which is owned by Industry Super Holdings and published under contract by Solstice Media's subsidiary company, Motion Publishing.

Solstice Media has commercial deals with Meta and Google to republish its public interest journalism on their news platforms. The agreements commenced in FY 21/22.

We are addressing the following questions in Point 2 of the consultation paper:

The review requests that news businesses provide as many examples as possible of where funding from commercial deals have been used to, for example:

- employ more journalists;

Solstice has employed three journalists as a result of the commercial deal.

- invest in professional development for journalists and other staff;

Participated in Meta and Google training programs and enabled Solstice to agree to fund specific training requests from staff. A more formal, sustainable training program is now being developed for Solstice staff as a result of this funding.

- invest in premises, websites, equipment, software, and data collection and use;

The funding enabled Solstice sites to upgrade their content management platforms and video player.

- expand the reach of news businesses;

The funding has underwritten and enabled the expansion of the South Australian news model into the Queensland market with the launch of InQueensland.

- invest in any other way that increases the amount, quality and distribution of core news content.

The funding enabled Solstice to enter into a partnership with a news broadcaster. This provided much needed video content to support storytelling on its sites and create additional monetisation opportunities. It also enabled the South Australian and Queensland operations to provide additional daily public health news updates, during COVID, for their audiences.

Yours sincerely



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Paul Hamra
Managing Director
Solstice Media