NEW BEATS REPORT

MASS REDUNDANCIES AND CAREER CHANGE IN AUSTRALIAN JOURNALISM

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We would like to dedicate this report to all Australian journalists facing job loss or forced career change, and in particular the more than 200 respondents who shared their experiences over a four-year period for this project.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The New Beats study recruited 225 participants in 2014 from an estimated 2,000 journalists whose positions became redundant between 2012 and 2014, and we surveyed them annually between 2014 and 2017.

Key Findings
- Most of the respondents had more than 25 years’ experience as journalists at the time of their initial redundancy. More than half of them were over the age of 50 at the time of the 2014 survey.
- A majority of those who took part in the initial survey came from Fairfax Media (47.6%) or News Limited (now News Corp Australia) (34.2%), with the remainder from a wide range of Australian newspapers, magazines, TV and radio news outlets. From this cohort, the number of completed responses was 113 in 2015, 123 in 2016 and 120 in 2017.
- While most reported that they were continuing to work in some form of journalism for at least some of the time, only around 10% of respondents worked in full-time journalism roles at the time of each of the surveys. Before their positions were made redundant, 77% were in full-time journalism roles.
- Throughout the survey period, most who looked for employment found at least some work, but working life became more precarious for many.
- Respondents continued to experience changes in their work arrangements across the lifespan of the project, with many working for multiple employers, sometimes simultaneously. Only 10% of them in the 2017 survey indicated that they had been employed in the same organisation or role since their initial redundancy.
- Membership of the Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance (MEAA) declined significantly post-job loss, even for those re-employed in journalism work of some kind. Around 73% of respondents indicated they were union members at the time of their redundancy (2012-2014). By 2017, about 46% of those still working in journalism in some capacity had union membership.
- While the Union had some critics, many respondents, both union and non-union members, acknowledged the support MEAA provided to them post-job loss.
- Overall, there was a decline in professional identification with journalism among respondents, with more than twice the number of participants describing their identity as journalists as ‘weak’ or ‘fading’ compared with ‘remaining intact’.
- Despite these changes to professional identity, nearly all former journalists who had moved into other forms of work told us that they found their journalism skills were useful.
- Income fell sharply in the immediate aftermath of redundancy, but gradually recovered, although those who worked in a combination of journalism and other roles, or outside of journalism, did better financially than those who remained solely in journalism.
- While redundancy was a traumatic experience for many respondents, a majority reported that they experienced an improved sense of well-being after leaving their jobs, which was often directly associated with having left stressful workplaces.
- For all the occupational challenges confronted by many of the respondents, by 2017 they were generally satisfied with their working arrangements by a margin of 73% to 11%.
- Gender and age were perceived issues for many respondents in finding work. Almost half of all women who completed the final survey felt that they had experienced some form of gender bias, and just over half of all respondents over the age of 50 said they had experienced ageism when seeking work.
- Nearly all respondents continued to keep in touch with former workmates, with many finding these ongoing relationships to be of benefit both socially and professionally.
- Overall, there was more pessimism than optimism about the future of journalism.
NEW BEATS REPORT

NEW BEATS PROJECT – BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

JOB LOSS IN AUSTRALIAN JOURNALISM

New Beats is a longitudinal study of the aftermath of mass job cuts in Australian journalism following the newspaper industry’s shift to digital-first production from 2012. The five-year research project has been mapping job loss across journalism and surveying those who have experienced redundancy to develop new insights into the scope and scale of occupational change and its implications. It has followed the lived experiences of job loss and re-employment through four annual surveys of a cohort of 225 journalists who lost their jobs in the period 2012 to 2014, using quantitative and qualitative methods.

The annual surveys, undertaken from 2014 to 2017, asked whether and how those who left newsrooms are adapting their traditional skills and remaking their careers in digital media. We have been tracking and analysing the experiences of those who are re-employed in journalism, those having difficulty finding paid journalistic work, and those who now work in other industries or who have left the labour market.

The project is funded by the Australian Research Council through a Linkage Project grant, LPI140100341 (2014-2019), and a Discovery Project grant, DP150102675 (2015-2019). Production of this report is supported by the Linkage Grant. The research team consists of six Chief Investigators (CIs) from five universities. The Lead CI and one other CI are from La Trobe University, while the other CIs are employed at Deakin University, the University of Melbourne, the University of Sydney and Swinburne University of Technology. There are also three industry partners in the Linkage project: the Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance (MEAA), the National Library of Australia (NLA), and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC).

This report is a summary and analysis of the 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 survey results. Its aim is to provide stakeholders, journalism researchers, and the wider public with our main findings. In addition to this report, we have published a number of other research outputs, including academic articles, conference presentations, and media pieces. Some of these are noted at the end of this report.

The surveys are complemented by 60 whole-of-life interviews with journalists talking about the broad arc of their careers before and after job loss. The National Library of Australia is curating the interviews through its Oral History and Folklore Collection. Material from these interviews will also be incorporated in podcasts and radio programs. These interviews are not mentioned in this report, which focuses on the surveys.

In response to a surge of journalism job losses in rural and regional Australia in 2015, we also conducted a one-off survey with journalists whose positions were made redundant in rural and regional news outlets (See Zion et al., 2016b). Through our ARC Discovery Project grant, we have also internationalised the project by partnering or engaging with researchers in The Netherlands, Indonesia, the US, Canada, South Africa, Finland and Brazil. In June 2018, we conducted an event discussing jobs after journalism with a number of these associates at the Melbourne Press Club (Melbourne Press Club, 2018). New Beats has also contributed to policy debates through submissions made to two Senate Inquiries: the Future of Public Interest Journalism Inquiry (Parliament of Australia, 2018a) and the Senate Select Committee on the Future of Work and Workers (Parliament of Australia, 2018b).

Through this suite of research and dissemination and engagement activities, the New Beats project has aimed to create greater understanding of the process and aftermath of redundancy in journalism and of the human effects and societal ramifications for an industry and occupation undergoing profound change. In practical terms, the project has also sought to provide detailed information to journalists and their advocates in the union on topics such as the likelihood of finding work, labour market demand for journalistic expertise, possible new career directions, re-training, and the impact of redundancy on professional identity, family life and well-being. More details of our research can be found on the project blog, www.newbeatsblog.com.

UNDERSTANDING JOB CUTS AND INDUSTRY CHANGE

In 2012, the Australian news media experienced the most serious contraction in its history. The Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance (MEAA) has calculated that around 1,000 journalists were made redundant or lost their jobs in that year alone (Christensen, 2013). The majority of these redundancies were from Fairfax Media and News Limited (now News Corp Australia), with further losses continuing each year since then. By the end of 2014, when the first of the four annual surveys was conducted by this team, the number of jobs lost over the previous three years was estimated to be around 2000. In 2018 MEAA estimated that 3,000 journalism jobs have been lost from large media companies since 2011 (MEAA, 2017, p. 6). Australia’s commercial media companies did not cut jobs to the same extent as their North American and British counterparts around the 2008 global financial crisis, but they were nevertheless contracting. An estimated 700 jobs were lost in Australia during 2008 and 2009 (Este, Warren, Murphy, & Alliance, 2010, p. 3), but hopes remained high that the extent of journalism layoffs by then experienced in the United States (Brownlee & Beam, 2012) and Britain might have been avoided. In 2010, Christopher Warren, the then head of MEAA, began his introduction to a report about the future of journalism with the observation that: ‘For many of us, 2010 brought with it a degree of optimism that the “carnage” that had been forecast for the business of journalism has abated somewhat’ (Este et al., 2010, p. 3).

But it hadn’t. What changed in 2012 was the realisation that this was not just a correction; rather, numbers would not recover, and hopes for a new sustainable business model for newspapers, to replace the ‘rivers of gold’ provided by classified advertising, had been dashed. Despite efforts to build digital revenue streams through online advertising
and subscriptions, media companies have since faced a further contraction of revenue as Google and Facebook have forged what has been described as a duopoly in digital advertising, with brutal consequences for media company revenues (Letts, 2016). Significant job losses have also occurred at commercial broadcast companies. Network Ten, which made heavy cuts to its news operations in 2013, went into receivership in June 2017 before being bought by American broadcaster CBS later that year. Meanwhile, job losses at the ABC were blamed on government funding cuts.

MEAA’s estimate of 3,000 journalist job losses notwithstanding, the precise number of job losses is impossible to determine for several reasons. These include corporate reticence about revealing details of job shedding, lack of data on newsroom employment across Australia, and lack of clarity around how many of the media job cuts specifically target journalism roles. And while most journalism job losses in Australia since 2012 have come from redundancies – voluntary or forced – this doesn’t account for all additional jobs that were lost by not replacing those journalists who have resigned or retired.

That said, the scale of job loss within the print, television and radio industries, that are now classified as legacy media, has been enormous. By one reckoning, Fairfax had around 1,000 editorial staff in 2011. Half of these jobs were gone by mid-2017, when a further redundancy round cut 125 jobs, leaving only around 375 editorial staff, spread across The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age, The Australian Financial Review, and the Sunday papers, The Sun Herald and The Sunday Age. In November 2018, Australia’s competition regulator approved the Nine takeover of Fairfax Media without placing any conditions, including on job protection. This has raised widespread concerns that a pooling of journalists from the two companies will lead to job cuts, and may jeopardise the continued operation of existing mastheads, especially in regional areas.

The impact of this scale of journalist job loss has been compounded by the decline in ancillary roles in newspapers, which in some cases have lost more than 75% of their total staff since 2012. As Newcastle Herald journalist Ian Kirkwood told ABC TV’s Media Watch in 2015: ‘We’re going from 110 staff a few years ago to 24 and I just don’t think you can expect the paper to realistically be the same ... Our fear is that it won’t have the relevance to readers anymore’ (‘Newcastle Herald cuts hit hard - ABC Media Watch,” 2015). Such examples also highlight that it is not only absolute numbers of job losses that are significant, but also the relative proportions of job losses to jobs remaining.

While acknowledging the challenge of verifying precise numbers on a national scale, the New Beats project has attempted to capture reported job losses since 2012 through a timeline on our blog: http://www.newbeatsblog.com/redundancy-timeline/. Included on this timeline, a version of which can be found at the end of this report, are details of journalist job shedding at everything from metropolitan daily newspapers to regional radio newsrooms and specialist online publications.

RE-EMPLOYMENT AFTER JOB LOSS: DIFFERENT FIGURES TELL DIFFERENT STORIES

If it is difficult to monitor the number of job losses in journalism, it is even more challenging to identify and track the number of new journalism jobs. An array of news publications has been launched in Australia during the last five years, including, but not limited to, The New Daily, Junkee, The Saturday Paper, ANZ’s Blue Notes, and the weekly print publication, Newcastle Sunday, as well as Australian editions of BuzzFeed, The Guardian, The New York Times, and HuffPost. However, the numbers of journalists hired by these publications has been low when compared with the staffing of traditional print newsrooms, and not all new ventures have survived. Newcastle Sunday closed after just 11 issues (Samios, 2017a), and the aforementioned HuffPost Australia ceased operating in 2017 (Samios, 2017b).

Attempts to assess the availability of journalism work have been complicated by the new categories of journalistic tasks found in digital newsrooms, and their related new job descriptors (e.g. content manager, audience curator). Moreover, occupation tracking undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), as part of its five-yearly national census, does not seem to have kept pace with change. The 2016 census data has so far not produced a detailed snapshot of the journalism workforce. This means there is a lack of data to support comparative analysis of job growth or decline over time.

The most recent relevant data available is from the 2011 census. It suggests a small decline in the number of print journalists in the five years to 2011, but an overall growth in the journalistic workforce from 15,573 to 16,125, due to increased numbers of bloggers, critics, editorial assistants and photojournalists (see Fuller, 2014). But researcher Folker Hanusch’s close reading of the 2011 data, by industry, found the more likely tally of journalists from that census was 10,691. His count included self-identified journalists or editors in paid employment in newspaper publishing, magazine and other periodical publishing, internet publishing and broadcasting, radio and free-to-air television broadcasting, as well as cable and other subscription broadcasting (Hanusch, 2013, p. 32).

Union membership is another indicator of journalism workforce trends. A significant, if predictable, decline in the membership of MEAA’s media section followed mass redundancies, particularly in the 2012-2014 period. In 2017, the union created a new category of membership called CommsPro to offset this decline and remain relevant to next-gen ‘hybrid’ media professionals working across journalism, digital content production, and public relations (MEAA, 2018, p. 4).

However defined, work and conditions of employment for journalists are changing and becoming more uncertain.
The rise of the so-called ‘gig economy’, which is reconfiguring work in the 21st century, is being felt particularly strongly, and suddenly, in journalism, which is no longer the relatively secure, unionised and middle-class occupation of the past. In 2017, the share of full-time work in journalism had declined to just over 69% of the journalism workforce, below the national average across all occupations in 2016 of around 75% (O’Donnell & Zion, 2018). In Australia as elsewhere, precarious or irregular forms of employment such as casual contracts and freelancing, are on the rise. There is evidence of consequent downward pressure on freelance rates for journalists.

**NEW BEATS PROJECT – SURVEY METHOD**

The four New Beats surveys were conducted annually from 2014 to 2017 with the cohort consisting of participants whose positions were made redundant from Australian newsrooms in 2012, 2013 and 2014. The initial 2014 survey, which attracted 225 completed responses, provided insights into experiences of redundancy and its aftermath, many of which were detailed in our research article ‘Working for less: the aftermath for journalists made redundant in Australia between 2012 and 2014’ (Zion et al., 2016). The project then followed this cohort of respondents for three subsequent annual surveys (2015-2017) to provide longitudinal data on how journalists careers evolve over time following job loss.

The survey rationale and design drew directly on insights gained from an exploratory pilot study undertaken in 2013 (O’Donnell, Zion, & Sherwood, 2016). Three insights gleaned from the pilot study were particularly helpful. First, finding journalists affected by job loss proved difficult once they had left newsrooms. But we found the non-probability method of snowball sampling (Atkinson & Flint, 2001; Ryan, 2009) provided an effective way of recruiting, especially through their formal and informal professional networks and through our partnership with MEAA, which approached some members to see if they would be willing to be invited to be potential survey participants.

Second, we found that questions about potentially sensitive issues (e.g. income loss) needed specific measurable quantitative information rather than general descriptive answers to enable in-depth analysis of major post-redundancy trends drawn from detailed results.

Third, because we wanted the project to have practical benefits, we asked pilot study respondents to nominate topics of concern and included questions on themes they identified in the subsequent 2014 survey. These included the availability and requirements of journalism job openings, skills needed to remain competitive in the job market, and types of journalism required in current employment compared to previous jobs.

The group surveyed in 2014 were Australian journalists who left their jobs through a redundancy process between 2012 and 2014. Potential research respondents were identified using a call-out to interested parties via

**While most journalism job losses in Australia since 2012 have come from redundancies – voluntary or forced – this doesn’t account for all additional jobs that are lost by not replacing those journalists who have resigned or retired.**
the New Beats website, the pilot survey database, industry contacts provided with permission by MEAA, published lists of journalists who had been made redundant in publications such as Crikey (see, for instance, Crikey, 2012), and personal contacts. These journalists were invited via email to participate in a survey about their individual job loss and post-redundancy experiences over a four-year period. Those who agreed were asked to share details of the survey with other colleagues who had lost their newsroom job between 2012 and 2014. In addition, Twitter and other social media platforms were used to recruit potential respondents. In this way, snowball sampling enabled us to identify and invite the participation of approximately 500 journalists, just under half of whom went on to complete the 2014 survey.

One limitation that this study acknowledges is that using snowball or respondent-driven sampling (Lee, 2009) runs the risk of over-representing those most invested in the topic (e.g. dissatisfied ex-journalists). Given the lack of an authoritative and independent list of journalists whose positions had been made redundant, however, alternative methods such as random sampling were not possible with this particular professional group.

The data collection instrument was a self-administered online survey of questions that was developed by the research team, drawing on insights from the research literature and other survey instruments, and accessed using the cloud-based SurveyMonkey tool. Of the 52 questions in the 2014 survey, eight concerned the respondents’ journalism career, there were nine questions about the redundancy experience, 20 questions on current work situations either in journalism or another field, five questions about making sense of change, five questions on demographic information and five questions about future involvement with the New Beats project. Seventeen of the questions were open-ended, in order to collect qualitative data about the respondents’ redundancy experiences.

Some of the questions were asked across all four surveys, while other themes that emerged from survey responses were followed up with new specific questions in subsequent surveys. These included a suite of questions in the final survey seeking details of career paths since redundancy. While the number of respondents declined after the first survey, sufficient numbers remained each year to allow for meaningful analysis of results across the four years of the survey. However, due to anonymity and ethics requirements, we were not able to track the specific individuals within the cohort who completed the surveys across the life of the project.

Having set out the background context for the New Beats project, we will now present and discuss some of the key results from the research.
WHO WERE THEY?
As shown in the demographic data in Figure 1, right, the cohort in 2014 was overwhelmingly aged 41 and above (85.3%) and was tertiary educated (70.7%). There were more male respondents than female (57.8% to 42.2%). Most respondents had undertaken some form of journalism education. For example, 48.9% had completed a journalism cadetship and 31.1% had completed a related undergraduate degree. The demographics of the cohort in each of the three subsequent years remained mostly similar. One difference which should be noted is that the population did trend older over time (beyond the fact that the whole cohort was three years older in the final survey), with a higher percentage of those aged 60 and over completing the survey in 2017 – compared to any other year.

Figure 6 provides further contextual information for the research by showing the year of redundancy for respondents. Almost two-thirds of those who completed the 2014 survey experienced redundancy in 2012, following the newspaper industry’s shift to digital-first production. Despite some variations from year to year, those who took redundancies in 2012 continued to be the largest group in all subsequent surveys.

WHERE DID THEY COME FROM?
Most of the respondents to the 2014 survey had significant experience in print journalism. The two major Australian newspaper companies, Fairfax Media and News Limited (now News Corp Australia) accounted for more than 80% of the them (47.6% and 34.2% respectively). Overall, more than half of the cohort had worked for more than 25 years as journalists at the time of their redundancies. More than three quarters took a voluntary – as against forced - redundancy (76.9%). A similar proportion took redundancy from a full-time position (77.3%). This indicates that before redundancy, most of our respondents had relatively stable, full-time careers in legacy media newsrooms. Figure 7 provides a snapshot of the combined redundancy data of the cohort.

FIGURES 1 - 6. DEMOGRAPHICS

1. AGE 2014

2. GENDER 2014

3. EDUCATION 2014

4. JOURNALISM EDUCATION 2014

5. UNION MEMBERSHIP (MEAA) 2014

6. YEAR OF REDUNDANCY BY NUMBERS COMPLETING SURVEY

Source: New Beats survey, 2014. Percentages may not add up due to rounding.
Across the four surveys, respondents were asked to nominate whether they were working within journalism, or in a combination of employment that included journalism and other work, or were working outside journalism. Through this period, the majority of our cohort identified as working in journalism, at least to some extent. In the 2014 survey around 30% said that they worked in journalism, another 30% worked in a mix of journalism and other work, while 22% had found work outside journalism and 11.6% were either looking for a job or taking a break. It is worth noting that the percentage of those aged 36-50 working outside of journalism increased over the lifetime of the survey. The overall findings about types of employment are presented in Figure 8.

We also asked respondents to describe their work status. In the 2014 survey, 77.3% of the cohort told us that they had been in full-time journalism roles prior to redundancy. Across all four surveys, those working in non-journalism were more likely to be in full-time roles. But irrespective of the kind of work they were doing, fewer respondents were employed full time than they were prior to redundancy. In 2017, 37% were in full-time work, with only around 10% of all respondents saying that they were in full-time journalism roles (including freelance) in each of the four surveys.

In response to survey questions from 2015 onwards, an increasing proportion of respondents said that they had opted to work in less than full-time roles, but for a range of reasons. Some nearing retirement age, for instance, saw pragmatic benefits to a change of pace, while others pointed to the advantages of more flexible arrangements, though in some cases with the caveat that of lower or less secure income.

### FIGURE 7: REDUNDANCY SNAPSHOT, 2014

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<th>FREQUENCY</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Part-time</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>174</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Involuntary</td>
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<td>ABC</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Channel 10</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The West Australian</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.1</td>
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<td>Bauer Media</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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### VARIABLE

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<th>VALUE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Journalism Experience (Years) 1-5</td>
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<td>3.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>16-20</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>21-25</td>
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<td>26-30</td>
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<td>31-35</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>17.3</td>
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<td>36-40</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>40+</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: New Beats survey, 2014

n=225
I find that now I am used to freelancing and the idea of going back to full-time work is not particularly attractive. I am 63, near retirement, and don’t mind if I don’t have work on some days. (RESPONDENT 63, 2017)

I do prefer freelance and casual work as it allows me the freedom to work for multiple organisations at the same time. However the work is lumpy and insecure and I have yet to contribute to my superannuation account. (RESPONDENT 55, 2017)

EMPLOYMENT PATHWAYS SINCE REDUNDANCY

For those who said they were working in journalism, there was only a slight decrease in the proportion who worked in legacy media across the four years of surveys, from 37.2% in 2014 to 32.5% in 2017. Over the same period, the percentage of those who were self-employed or freelance edged up from 12.4% (2014) to 14.2% (2017), while the percentage reporting working for multiple employers rose from 15.3% (2014) to 20.6% (2017).

While an overall majority of respondents still identified as working in journalism in some way across all surveys, many have taken roles outside of journalism that draw on their journalism skills, especially in strategic communications. In the 2017 survey, sixteen respondents - 41% of those who left journalism - said their role was in some form of public relations or strategic communications.

Descriptions of current roles provide just one dimension of the post-redundancy career pathway picture. In the 2017 survey, we asked respondents to list all of their employment since redundancy. The most common theme was that many had been working for multiple employers, either simultaneously or sequentially. Just 11 of the 118 respondents who responded (9%) - around 10% - said that they had been employed in the same organisation or role since their initial redundancy.

Of those who weren’t in either category, most said that they had retired or had been freelancing since redundancy. Only a few (14) discussed retraining for new kinds of work. Some of these were PhD candidates who were aiming to develop academic careers, while others, such as this respondent, went in very different directions:

After redundancy, started freelance voiceover work as a second income stream for eventual full-time employment. I still do this today. Worked in public relations for just under four years after redundancy (two different organisations), then reentered journalism. Worked in print for a little under two years, then worked in radio up until June this year, when I resigned. I picked up some teaching work at the local university in the media and public relations field. In August 2016, I trained as a marriage celebrant and started my business. I now do this full time, after giving birth to my first child in July. I do not intend to ever work in media again. (RESPONDENT 60, 2017)
UNION MEMBERSHIP AND THE ROLE OF MEAA IN THE REDUNDANCY PROCESS

The 2014 survey found 73% of the 225 respondents – that is, 164 journalists who had union membership at the time of redundancy, with 161 journalists in the Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance (MEAA), two journalists in the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU), and one in the UK-based Equity union.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the 2014 survey found union membership declined significantly post-job loss, especially for those re-employed outside journalism. Only eleven of these 50 respondents were still union members. However, membership decline was also significant amongst those 137 respondents still working in some type of journalism, with just 50% reporting they were still union members (66 in MEAA, two in the CPSU and one in Equity UK).

To probe perceptions of the role of MEAA in the redundancy process, the 2014 survey asked respondents if they received union support around job loss and, if so, what type of support. A total of 178 of the 225 respondents responded, including both union and non-union members, with 104 journalists indicating they received support, while 74 indicated they did not receive support. The fact that union members and non-members alike benefit from Australian industry awards and enterprise agreements achieved through collective bargaining, including redundancy provisions, may well explain this cohort’s ready interest in the issue of union support. A total of 104 respondents from the 2014 survey commented on forms of support from MEAA. The vast majority of these responses highlighted helpful support, ranging from collective negotiations at the company level aimed at minimising the number of job cuts, through to individualised advice/advocacy to obtain maximum redundancy entitlements. Moral support from the union was a recurring theme.

Conversely, 64.6% of respondents (82) indicated they received inadequate or no assistance after the initial redundancy, although not everyone in this group was dissatisfied. A total of 29.1% of respondents (37), including six who stated ‘non-applicable’, indicated they did not seek assistance, for a variety of reasons. These included: rapid re-employment, satisfaction with voluntary redundancy, leaving journalism to work in another sector, retirement, or a perception that assistance was unnecessary, unwanted, or only available to union members.

Nonetheless, the remaining 35.4% of respondents (45) criticised the union for not offering the assistance they had hoped for and would have preferred, at both the individual and occupational levels. Their individual priorities included post-redundancy membership fee reductions, financial and legal advice, and counselling and emotional support. More general priorities included redeployment assistance, help with the transition to freelancing/contract-based work, information on job openings, digital classes, and networking.

The perceived inadequacy of union support at a time when some felt they needed it most triggered strong emotional responses from some of these respondents, including distress, anger, and disappointment. A common theme was that they had expected MEAA to reach out further to them than it had.

Advice, support, reassurance, legal help for a colleague. The union pushed for help to get our resumes up to scratch which was invaluable.

(Respondent 89, 2017)

They said they would fight for my job but it was clear to me there wasn’t a job available to me. I’d rate the union’s support as fairly non-existent.

(Respondent 234, 2014)

They did their best. The poor buggers are trying to look after the interests of all those who are in work as well as those taking redundancy – not an easy task.

(Respondent 18, 2017)
With so many changes to their professional lives, it is not surprising that one finding from our 2014 survey was that more respondents described their identity as journalists as weak or fading (85 out of 122 respondents or 69.7%) rather than intact (37 out of 122 respondents or 30.3%). A corresponding loss of professional status was noted in a number of responses, including this one:

The most difficult part of the process was the loss of professional identity. I had always been proud to say that I was a journalist and I loved my job but, suddenly, at age 55, I was out on my ear and having to reinvent myself.

(RESPONDENT 200, 2014)

But despite such issues, the value of journalism skills for securing work remained strong over time. In response to a question in the 2017 survey, an overwhelming number of respondents moving into different forms of work post-redundancy said that they found their journalism skills were useful.

My new career is totally different to journalism, so it doesn’t really compare. I don’t feel connected to my former industry anymore, however, I have found the communications skills of journalism is an advantage in my new industry when establishing client relationships.

(RESPONDENT 101, 2017)

When I left journalism that was it - I don’t want to go back. In any case I feel journalism ‘skills’ don’t count for much - they are really skills you cannot apply - or be recognised - for many jobs.

(RESPONDENT 88, 2017)

The changes were also notable in the lower salary bands. Only five of the respondents (2.2%) told us they earned under $40,000 before redundancy. In 2014, around 25% of the 187 respondents undertaking at least some work after redundancy reported incomes that were $40,000 or below. In 2017 the corresponding percentage was 21.6%.

While incomes fell across the board, those who left journalism were more likely to be earning more. For example, in the 2014 survey only 11 of those (15.7%) who continued to work in journalism after redundancy earned more than $100,000. Among those who worked in a combination of journalism and other work, the figure was around the same at 10 people (14.9%). But 15 (30%) of the 50 people who found work in other fields earned salaries above the same amount. Over the four years of surveys the incomes of those who remained in journalism fell behind those who worked in a combination of journalism and other work and those outside of journalism. In 2017 18.2% of those who worked as journalists earned $100,000 and over, compared to 40% who worked in a combination of journalism and other work, and 43.6% of those who worked outside journalism.

This is not necessarily surprising, given that those who said they were not working in journalism were more likely to have full-time work across the life of the survey. But filtering the results to respondents who were working full time, the same trendline was even more pronounced across the four surveys: in 2017, full-timers earning over $100,000 were in a small minority amongst those working in a combination of journalism and other roles and those working wholly outside of journalism.
The initial survey in 2014 provided ample evidence that redundancy had been a traumatic experience for many respondents. But many also told us that after the initial redundancy period they experienced improved well-being associated with leaving stressful workplaces. Out of 217 respondents, 114 (52.5%) said their working conditions had improved. A number of these mentioned feeling healthier than before because they had more free time, and used it to exercise, cook healthy food, relax or just enjoy life.

Figures 11, 12 and 13, below, provide data on the income trends over time for those working in journalism, those working in a mix of journalism and other, and those working outside of journalism. What these tables show is that those who continued to work in journalism (including freelance) earned less than both those who worked in a mix of journalism and other occupations, and those who worked outside of journalism, and the gap became more pronounced over time.

Three years on, we asked the cohort: ‘Overall, how has your life and well-being changed, for better or worse, since the initial redundancy?’ We analysed the responses to categorise them as indicating better, worse, or the same level of well-being than before redundancy. The majority of the respondents in the 2017 survey (65%, or 78 of 120 responses), slightly more than in 2014, told us that despite ongoing challenges, on balance their sense of personal well-being was better:

While some noted they would still prefer to be working in a newsroom, many mentioned the increasingly negative elements of the workplace culture that they had left behind.

I work a lot from home, I make my own rules and decisions, and I don’t have a third of the stress I had in my last job. That was an impossible workload, with minimal or no support from a misogynistic management. My life now is creative, stimulating and purposeful. My health has no doubt improved due to reduced stress levels, my income is more or less the same, although less regular, and my well-being has skyrocketed. I can think of no negatives in my experience.

(RESPONDENT 38, 2014)
Overall, despite the hell I've been through, life is better. I've learnt a lot of things about myself and my values, my own expectations about myself and other people, and my expectations about life. I don’t feel as secure with work, and I don’t have the same earning potential that I had while working in journalism, but one of the lessons I learnt was the old cliche that money doesn’t buy happiness. I value other things in my life that bring me real happiness.

(Respondent 38, 2017)

Comments from 27 out of 120 respondents in 2017 (22.5%) who said their well-being was the same pre- and post-redundancy placed greater emphasis on ongoing challenges, such as dealing with the financial implications of insecure work.

Over the lifespan of the surveys, most who looked for employment found at least some work, but working life became more precarious for many.

There have been huge changes both personally and professionally. Mixed picture. It’s taken five years to exceed my salary. There’s a lot less certainty, but also a lot more freedom to choose, and my skills have dramatically increased. So both good and bad.

(Respondent 112, 2017)

It’s hard to say - it has ups and downs that are hard to relate to the redundancy or otherwise. I feel like I am better able to cope with change - if the rug was pulled out from underneath me and I was forced to switch gears again, I guess I know that I would be able to deal with it. But it’s tiring not really having any real job security sometimes.

(Respondent 44, 2017)
Some also noted that the change in their professional identity post-redundancy had been difficult to deal with. A few used the phrase ‘invisible’ to describe how they now felt.

Only 15 of the 120 (12.5%) who completed the 2017 survey said things were worse, with almost all of these responses referring to financial instability and less secure work.

**JOB SATISFACTION**

In the 2017 survey we asked: ‘If you are currently employed in any capacity, taking everything into consideration, how do you feel about your current job as a whole?’ As Figure 14 illustrates, the responses were remarkably positive, with 73.3% satisfied, 15.8% neutral, and just 10.8% dissatisfied. Those working in journalism in some form were more slightly more likely to be satisfied than those who were working in non-journalism roles.

Given the precariousness of many working arrangements and generally lower pay, this finding illustrates a surprising level of adaptability for a cohort previously used to relative stability in their careers. At least part of the explanation for this finding can be linked to the comments about the extent to which the newsrooms they had left became pressure cookers as the impact of cost cutting took hold.

**FIGURE 14. JOB SATISFACTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>- ALL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely satisfied</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately satisfied</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly satisfied</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL OF SATISFIED</strong></td>
<td><strong>88</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly dissatisfied</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately dissatisfied</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremely dissatisfied</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL OF DISSATISFIED</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted Average: 5.41
GENDER, RE-EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME

While there were more men than women respondents in all four surveys, when broken down in percentage terms, gender representation was quite similar in the categories ‘working in journalism, including freelance’ and ‘working in a mix of journalism and other work’. The relative male/female percentages were more changeable in the ‘working outside of journalism’ category with women slightly more represented here, while overall, men were more likely to say that they had retired than women.

But did men and women experience the process of securing work differently? This question arose following comments in earlier surveys, and the finding from a 2016 survey by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) that there was a 23% pay gap between men and women in media (MEAA, 2016), an issue reflected in the experience of this respondent:

More than 1,000 people were surveyed for ‘Mates over Merit: The Women in Media Report’. Only 2% of women surveyed said there was equal pay for equal work in their organisations. The vast majority – 81% of respondents – acknowledged the gender pay gap, which is 23.3% in the Information, Media and Telecommunications Industry sector, according to the WGEA. We asked respondents in 2017 to consider if gender may have had a negative influence on employment opportunities and income post-redundancy.

Of those who answered, 23 women (46% of those women who provided an answer) said that it was an issue, the comments shown on this page being typical of the responses. Conversely just eight men (14.5% of those who answered) said that it had been an issue for them. Several respondents also indicated that they did not believe that the question applied to them.

AGE AND AGEISM

Ageism was a topic that came up in answers to several of our open-ended questions in all surveys. In the 2017 survey we also focused directly on age and ageism, pointing out to respondents that the results from previous surveys suggested that age may negatively influence employment status and income, and inviting them to share any relevant experiences with us. Not surprisingly, those over 50 were slightly more likely to have reported adverse experiences, or to suggest that age may be a factor when seeking work. The results are in Figure 16. Filtered by gender, the responses were broadly similar.
A common theme in the responses was a perception that employers tended to associate digital skills with younger job candidates. "If I was across as many platforms as they usually require, I’d enter Australian Ninja", said one. And even actual experience in digital wasn’t enough to shake the stigma that older workers were regarded as ‘old news’.

There is massive discrimination in this industry against anyone over 50. It’s all about diversity in terms of ethnic background etc but no diversity when it comes to age. Its demoralising and means that I no longer even bother to apply for news room jobs.

I am 48 and being older makes it harder because I think employers are looking for younger employees who generally are more adaptable to the digital world.

Shattered expectations initially - have very low expectation of ever working in a paid/ongoing role in the media again. Am perceived in my industry as too old (at 55), even though I am teaching social media, digital and mobile journalism. Ironic.

KEEPING IN TOUCH
Across the four years of the surveys, we asked respondents about the extent and nature of their contact with work colleagues after redundancy. The consistent picture was that nearly all of them kept in touch with their former colleagues, with many finding these ongoing relationships to be of benefit both socially and professionally, albeit for some, to a lesser extent over time. These responses from the 2017 survey evoke some of the common themes that arose in all the surveys around the importance of maintaining contact.

Former colleagues have helped me find freelance work as I have helped them. Also, former colleagues working in, or operating media agencies have engaged me. Equally, I helped a former co-worker find full time work for six months. Mostly, however, contact is of a social nature in which among other things, we bemoan the poor state of journalism and the declining standards of sub-editor-free publications.

These colleagues are commonly friends. Some have introduced me to editors and some are now editors themselves and have asked me to write for them.

FIGURE 16. AGE AND NEGATIVE IMPACT ON EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND INCOME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>ALL AGES</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>OVER 50 YRS. OLD</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>OVER 50 YRS. OLD AND HAVE NOT RETIRED</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes ageism in digital skills</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes in/to get job interviews</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes younger journalist competitor/preference</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL YES</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>43.1%</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>53.7%</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAY INFLUENCE</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No influence</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No am young enough (still young)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL NO</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>71</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THOUGHTS ON THE FUTURE OF JOURNALISM
Our final survey question in the final survey asked respondents to tell us how they felt about the future of journalism. A ‘glass half full’ reading of the responses is that the tally of those who were either optimistic or had mixed feelings was roughly the same as the total number of pessimists. But the same figures also tell us that pessimists outnumbered optimists by nearly two to one. The quotes on this page traverse the range of views.

FIGURE 17: FEELINGS ABOUT THE FUTURE OF JOURNALISM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentiment</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pessimistic</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>41.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed feelings</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimistic</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>119</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: New Beats survey 2017

CONCLUSIONS
The experiences of redundancy have been multi-dimensional and complex for the project’s respondents. Yet while life post-redundancy has presented many common challenges, including an erosion of professional identity, instability in employment arrangements, and reduced income, many of those surveyed have shown considerable resilience in forging new kinds of working lives. The extent to which they have been successful in finding or creating new employment is a strong indication that journalism skills are highly transferrable across occupations. In particular, communication, research, and analytical skills are in high demand. At the same time, it is clear that discriminatory social attitudes around gender and age continue to have an adverse impact on employment opportunities post-redundancy.

The findings from the four New Beats surveys, taken together, contribute to our understanding of the impact of career transition on Australian journalists, and also shed light on the implications of the rapid growth of precarious work for individual journalists and the wider occupation. Career disruption, which is now commonplace for workers across many sectors, is increasingly both a research and policy theme. The New Beats surveys have enabled us to gain insights into the processes and impacts of such disruptions in a profession which many entered believing that they had secured a job for life. We thank everyone who participated by sharing their own experiences across the four years of the surveys.

FUTURE OF JOURNALISM

PESSIMISTIC
Even less jobs as employers look to cut costs further. More pressure on journalists to deliver more. Ultimately journalism will go the way of dinosaurs - extinct.
(Respondent 13, 2017)

MIXED
It will be a diversified future, with many voices and many sources of information, which means that, for better or worse, we will not have newspaper proprietors or other media magnates acting as gatekeepers to see what is best for the community to know.
(Respondent 8, 2017)

OPTIMISTIC
Journalism has a great future but it may not be as many people alive today will remember. In a few short years we moved from having to process film (stills or video) and then physically move it to a processing point. Now a picture or video is instant from everyone. It happens. Suck it up and make it work for you.
(Respondent 4, 2017)
ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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is Lead Chief CI of the New Beats project and Professor of Journalism at La Trobe University, as well as Director of the university’s Transforming Human Society’s Research Focus Area. Prior to joining La Trobe in 2006, he worked as a journalist and broadcaster for 20 years and has since written the documentary, The Sounds of Aus, which told the story of the Australian accent. His 2017 book, The Weather Obsession, explored how digital media has changed the way we connect to weather and climate.

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PROFESSOR TIM MARJORIBANKS
is Associate Dean (Research and Development), and Professor of Management, Faculty of Business and Law, Swinburne University. His research and teaching engage with debates in organisational innovation and transformation, and leadership and management practice, in Australia and internationally. His work focuses in particular on the media industry, journalism practice, sport, and new technologies, and his research has been supported by a number of Australian Research Council grants. Prior to joining Swinburne, he held academic appointments at La Trobe University and The University of Melbourne.

DR PENNY O’DONNELL
is Senior Lecturer in International Media and Journalism, University of Sydney. Her research critically examines the changing material conditions of news work and their consequences for professional digital journalism in Australia and internationally. A thematic focus of her current work is the role of union revitalisation and the collective agency of journalists in the change process. This research has developed over a decade through industry partnerships and support from several Australian Research Council grants. Prior to working at Sydney, she held an academic appointment in Journalism Studies at the University of Technology Sydney (1994-2007), and worked in broadcasting, news agency reporting, publishing, and media training.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR ANDREW DODD
is Director of the Centre for Advancing Journalism at the University of Melbourne. He was a broadcaster at ABC Radio National, where he presented several programs and founded the long running Media Report program. He was also a reporter at ABC TV’s 7.30 Report. He has also been a media and business writer at The Australian newspaper, a reporter and presenter at Radio Netherlands and a media writer for Crikey.com.au, as well as a freelancer for numerous other publications. He was the director of the journalism program at Swinburne University and is currently a chief investigator on two New Beats research projects funded by the Australian Research Council. He has a PhD in history from the University of Melbourne and currently co-presents the Media Files Podcast on The Conversation.

DR MONIKA WINARNITA
is Research Officer for the New Beats project at La Trobe’s Department of Communication and Media. Her PhD thesis (ANU 2014) is published as a book (Sussex Academic Press UK 2015) and was awarded Monograph of Distinction in Immigration/Refugee issues (University of Victoria BC Canada 2017). She has written opinion articles for The Jakarta Post, Jakarta Globe and The Conversation in English and Indonesian, and she is regularly interviewed for SBS Radio’s Indonesian language program. She is currently a recipient of the La Trobe Humanities and Social Sciences Early Career Researcher grant on the project ‘Indonesian women, online media and digital activism’.
NEW BEATS REPORT

REDUNDANCY TIMELINE

The following timeline is based on data accessed from media reports by the New Beats project as at November 2018. For more information, please contact Lawrie Zion at l.zion@latrobe.edu.au

An electronic version of this timeline can be found at www.newbeatsblog.com/redundancy-timeline/

2012

JUNE 17, 2012
1900 job cuts predicted
Fairfax Media announced massive job cuts to adjust to shrinking revenue. Seven news reported 150 of the cuts would be to metro reporters in Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra.

JUNE 26, 2012
Heavy job losses at News Ltd
Reports of job losses in News Limited newsrooms in regional Queensland turned out to be the tip of the iceberg. Two years later, Crikey received leaked financial statements showing roughly one in eight of News Limited newspaper jobs had disappeared in one year. It was not clear what the breakdown was between journalists, photographers and support staff.

SEPTEMBER 2012
MEAA estimates 700 jobs lost
MEAA federal secretary Christopher Warren estimated 700 journalists, or one in seven journalism jobs in the two main newspaper companies, were lost over the winter: about 270 from Fairfax, 300 from News Limited, and the rest were casuals and contributors from both groups.

NOVEMBER 2, 2012
Network Ten loses its ‘Breakfast’
After posting a full year loss of nearly $13 million, Network Ten axed its ‘Breakfast’ show and sacked six of its newsreaders and presenters, as well as 10 senior journalists, from its Queensland news team. MEAA reported in October that the network was looking to dismiss 100 journalists.

2013

JULY 11, 2013
More cuts at Fairfax and News
One year after 20 jobs were cut at the Illawarra Mercury, Fairfax have announced another 15 jobs would go. The paper’s general manager said he couldn’t guarantee that there would be no further cuts. Meanwhile, key positions at News Ltd remain unoccupied following a restructure.

JULY 2, 2013
WIN TV Ballarat cuts jobs
WIN Ballarat’s director of news Steve Marshall has been made redundant after 11 years in the job. A number of production staff at the WIN Television Ballarat office, including one member from the IT department, and the whole production team had been made redundant.

JUNE 11, 2013
Western Australian Newspapers set to cut 100 jobs
Up to 100 jobs are set to be cut at West Australian Newspapers (WAN) through voluntary and potentially forced redundancies.

4 JUNE 2013
Suburban newspapers to be shut down
Seven suburban newspapers in Melbourne’s southeast will be shut down, with the loss of 32 jobs.

DECEMBER 2012
Global Mail cuts six jobs
The Global Mail was less than a year old when these cuts were announced. The investigative journalism site closed permanently in February 2014 less than two years after its launch.

2014

OCTOBER 1, 2013
Fairfax (Magazines) fold
Fairfax ceased publishing its glossy magazines, the (Sydney) magazine and the (Melbourne) magazine, with at least 45 jobs expected to be cut, although there was talk of some of the employees being redeployed to other parts of the organisation.

NOVEMBER 14, 2013
Senior Journalists leave AFR
Another round of voluntary redundancies means an estimated 30 staff will depart from the Australian Financial Review, many with decades of experience.

MARCH 11, 2014
Starting again: How losing my job helped me find my way
My little girl was four months old in August, 2013, when I got a phone call from my chief of staff. “Lauren, I have some bad news”, my heart sank. Our whole office was being made redundant, effective in October.

MAY 7, 2014
Fairfax announces 70-80 redundancies
Fairfax announced it will dismiss 30 of its 45 metro photographers and rely more on Getty Images. The news prompted staff at the SMH and the Age to go on strike. Also on the block are 35 subeditors and 15 lifestyle reporters.

JUNE 11, 2014
Restructures, Cutbacks at Seven and Ten
A restructuring of its news and the cancellation of Today Tonight in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane leads to cuts (previously announced in 2013). Ten announced the previous month that up to 150 jobs would be cut nationwide from its news operations and engineering departments.
REDUNDANCY TIMELINE

JUNE 16, 2014
Cuts to MMP, Sky News, and Ten
Crikey reports that the closure of seven suburban mastheads in Melbourne owned by Metro Media Publishing means an estimated 32 employees will lose their jobs. Meanwhile there have been journalist redundancies at Sky and at Ten, including a notable Canberra veteran.

NOVEMBER 25, 2014
400 jobs to go at ABC
Federal government cuts were blamed for ABC plans to shed 400 jobs – around 10 per cent of its workforce – including around 100 jobs from the news division. This includes the closure of some regional bureaux.

MARCH 12, 2015
Fairfax plans regional redundancies
Fairfax Media has unveiled a plan to seek 62 voluntary redundancies from newsroom roles as it tries to revitalise its regional Victorian outlets and set them up to deal with increasing demand for online content. MEAA condemns these cuts.

APRIL 2015
Radio jobs go following merger
Nearly 50 employees at 4BC, 2UE, Magic 1278 and Magic 882 were dismissed soon after their shifts as Fairfax’s merger with Macquarie Radio started to take shape.

MAY 14, 2015
Fairfax to cut 50 jobs from Illawarra Mercury and South Coast papers
Fairfax Media has announced a proposal to axe more than 50 journalists, photographers and commercial staff from its Illawarra and South Coast newspapers.

MAY 21, 2015
WIN-TV Pulls out of Mildura, Mackay
WIN-TV has closed its Mildura and Mackay offices with little or no warning to employees, drawing criticism from MEAA. Meanwhile, Seven has confirmed the departure of its executive producer of investigative news, Max Uechtritz, with at least two staffers being made redundant and another 12 staff set to be redeployed, some interstate.

MAY 28, 2015
Commuters to journey without mX
An estimated 30 full-time journalists will be affected by News Corp’s decision to stop publishing its free afternoon newspaper in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. The paper had been a fixture during the afternoon peak hour since 2001. Staff were told redundancies were inevitable but management would try to redeploy some positions.

JULY 2, 2015
Fairfax cuts regional jobs
Fairfax Media has announced 69 jobs to be made redundant in the Hunter, including 37 full-time jobs at the Newcastle Herald.

JULY 23, 2015
Fairfax to cut 50 jobs from Illawarra Mercury and South Coast papers
Fairfax Media has announced a proposal to axe more than 50 journalists, photographers and commercial staff from its Illawarra and South Coast newspapers.

AUGUST 27, 2015
Fairfax cuts regional jobs
Fairfax has announced 69 jobs to be made redundant in the Hunter, including 37 full-time jobs at the Newcastle Herald.

SEPTEMBER 18, 2015
Three West Australian newspapers to be axed
Three regional Western Australian newspapers will close under a planned Fairfax Media restructure. The Wagin Argus, the Merredin - Wheatbelt Mercury and the Central Midlands Advocate will be culled under the proposal.

SEPTEMBER 21, 2015
Prime Media axes jobs in regional NSW
Prime Media Group confirms it has made a number of senior editorial positions redundant in Wagga Wagga, Tamworth and Canberra.

SEPTEMBER 22, 2015
Glen Innes to lose its radio news service
Glen Innes will lose its local radio news service at the end of the month. Newsreader John Shaw was presented with his marching orders from Northern Broadcasters 2NZ and GEM FM on Monday, and will cease working for the radio stations on Friday, October 23.

SEPTEMBER 23, 2015
Southern Cross Austereo confirms journalist redundancies
Journalists in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane have been made redundant in the wake of a “streamlining” of Southern Cross Austereo’s news services.

SEPTEMBER 24, 2015
Launceston Examiner and Burnie Advocate could lose staff
Up to 13 full-time jobs could be cut at two Tasmanian newspapers, as Fairfax undertakes a major restructure.

OCTOBER 28, 2015
WIN television network announces plans to close its studios in Victoria
WIN Network will relocate its nightly half-hour Victorian news bulletins from Ballarat to its head office in Wollongong, New South Wales.
**REDUNDANCY TIMELINE**

**2015**

**NOVEMBER 23, 2015**

*News Corp axing 55 journos from newspapers*

News Corp Australia will slash 55 journalism roles across its newspapers, a move which has drawn condemnation from the Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance. The publishing company met with the journalists’ union to discuss the redundancy program, while editorial managers responsible for the cuts have also been briefed about the program, according to News Corp publication *The Australian*.

**SEPTEMBER 5, 2016**

*30 more redundancies have occurred*

Around 30 more redundancies take place at Fairfax in Sydney and Melbourne, many of which are involuntary, according to an MEAA spokesperson.

**OCTOBER 12, 2016**

*News Corp to axe 300 jobs in ARM acquisition, suggests report*

The News Corp acquisition of ARM News & Media’s Australian Regional Media (ARM) will see 300 jobs cut as News Corp looks to secure “backoffice synergies”, according to a report in *The Australian*.

**2016**

**NOVEMBER 23, 2015**

*Fairfax will axe 150 jobs at its Metro Media division by May 2016*

The *Weekend Australian* reports that Fairfax will axe 150 jobs at its Metro Media division by May 2016 in a much bigger wave of cuts than was initially anticipated.

**MARCH 17, 2016**

*Fairfax Media to cut 120 editorial jobs at the Sydney Morning Herald and The Age*

Fairfax Media is set to cut the “equivalent of 120 full-time jobs” from news and business across newspapers The Sydney Morning Herald and The Age.

**MARCH 31, 2016**

*The Canberra Times to adopt quality compact print format*

Voluntary redundancies of approximately 12 full time equivalent staff are expected across Fairfax Media’s ACT publishing operations and The Canberra Times.

**APRIL 28, 2016**

*WA’s Scoop Publishing ceases publication of its nine magazines*

The independent publisher Scoop Magazines closes down after publishing niche magazines for 19 years.

**SEPTEMBER 12, 2016**

*News Corp to axe 300 jobs in ARM acquisition, suggests report*

The News Corp acquisition of ARM News & Media’s Australian Regional Media (ARM) will see 300 jobs cut as News Corp looks to secure “backoffice synergies”, according to a report in *The Australian*.

**DECEMBER 2, 2016**

*Seven West Media opens voluntary redundancy program*

Seven West Media has kicked off a voluntary redundancy program as the media company struggles with a short advertising market.
DECEMBER 7, 2016
**News Corp Australia announces redundancies and $40M cost-cutting**
Company says it will use forced redundancies, if necessary, to reach goal of cutting 42 full-time positions.

MARCH 8, 2017
**Foreign Correspondent and 7.30 staff tapped for redundancy at ABC**
Up to 85 staff have already been told they will be made redundant after MD Michelle Guthrie announced new efficiency measures.

APRIL 5, 2017
** Fairfax Media announces further job losses, slashes 30 million from editorial budget**
Editorial staff at mastheads including The Age and The Sydney Morning Herald are again facing redundancies, though it is not yet known how many jobs will go.

APRIL 11, 2017
**News Corp Australia makes most of its photographers and subeditors redundant to cut costs**
The Daily Telegraph, Herald Sun and Courier-Mail will lose dozens of staff and comes after News Corp posted a second-quarter loss of $287m in February.

MAY 3, 2017
**Fairfax Media to cut a quarter of journalists at SMH, The Age and AFR**
Up to 125 newsroom staff to be made redundant in a $30m cost-cutting drive that will see the three mastheads rely more on contributors.

JUNE 7, 2017
**Pacific Magazines reveals 11 redundancies as it looks to further reduce cost base before 30 June**
Pacific Magazines is set to reduce its cost base with 11 redundancies planned, for sub-editors across all brands to outsource their work to external sub copy business, Pagemasters.

JUNE 6, 2017
**ABC’s stunning axing of 30-year Adelaide veteran**
ABC staff in South Australia are shocked by interstate management’s decision to axe Leigh Radford, a highly respected 30-year veteran who headed up rural and national programs for ABC Regional.

JUNE 20, 2017
**Pacific Magazines reveals 11 redundancies as it looks to further reduce cost base before 30 June**
Pacific Magazines is set to reduce its cost base with 11 redundancies planned, for sub-editors across all brands to outsource their work to external sub copy business, Pagemasters.

JUNE 26, 2017
**Radio jobs for the chop as ABC rolls out redundancies**
Staff in the ABC Radio division were told that nine jobs would go as part of the latest round of ABC redundancies.

JULY 11, 2017
**Nine News Darwin set to lose local bulletin, a dozen jobs cut**
Sweeping cuts at Nine News Darwin mark the end of a standalone commercial news bulletin for the Northern Territory, and about a dozen staff will lose their jobs.

JULY 28, 2017
** When a Courier Mail pineapple story is not just a pineapple story**
Staff at the Courier Mail in Brisbane watch as dozens of colleagues walk out the door following continuing redundancies.

JULY 28, 2017
**Health Warning**
Bauer Media Chief executive Paul Dykzeul tells the eight staff of Good Health magazine that they will be made redundant as the magazine would now be produced in New Zealand.

SEPTEMBER 12, 2017
**Newcastle Sunday delivers its last newspaper**
Mumbrella reports that independent newspaper Newcastle Sunday is ceasing publication, effective immediately.

MAY 4, 2017
**Cuts to arts journalism at Arts Hub and Fairfax**
The Daily Review reports that both The Sydney Morning Herald and The Age plan on cutting their arts editorial staff back to one single arts editor/journalist at each paper. Meanwhile, Deborah Stone, the editor of the online art magazine, ArtsHub, has taken a redundancy.

MAY 26, 2017
**Radio jobs for the chop as ABC rolls out redundancies**
Staff in the ABC Radio division were told that nine jobs would go as part of the latest round of ABC redundancies.

NOVEMBER 3, 2017
**Seven West Media job cuts raise fears for The West Australian, Sunday Times journalists**
As Seven West Media employees brace for big staff cuts announced by the company, the media union has raised fears for the future of the Sunday Times newspaper.
NOVEMBER 9, 2017
Fairfax to launch new magazine for Sydney region
Fairfax Media will close six Australian Community Media mastheads: Hills News, Rouse Hill Courier, Pennrith City Gazette, St Marys/Mt Druitt Star, Blacktown Sun and Parramatta Holroyd Sun. The six titles will be replaced by a single magazine to be launched early 2018 servicing north-west Sydney.

NOVEMBER 29, 2017
HuffPost and Fairfax joint venture ends
HuffPost Australia’s joint venture with Fairfax Media has come to an end. Fairfax Media will redeploy staff members – of which there are more than 30 – into the metro business, while others will be left without jobs as the Huffington Post’s local team is expected to be reduced to a handful of contractors.

DECEMBER 4, 2017
Bad week for Bourke
For more than 130 years, The Western Herald was the voice of the community in the far western NSW city of Bourke. But no more. Last week the independent newspaper’s owner issued termination notices for three staff on the paper. It was once home to the writings of a young Henry Lawson and published the poems of Harry “Breaker” Morant.

DECEMBER 4, 2017
Women’s Weekly cuts senior roles
Crikey reports that Bauer Media’s Australian Women’s Weekly took a hit with up to 15 jobs cut, including the senior roles of chief sub-editor and art director. Bauer management told staff the previous Friday to be assembled for an “important” announcement first thing Monday morning, leaving staff to fret and wait nervously over the weekend.

APRIL 6, 2018
Domain’s GM Trent Casson departs in restructure as company makes a ‘small number’ of redundancies
Domain’s national magazine publisher and general manager of Victorian operations, Trent Casson, will leave the company in the coming weeks as it looks for operational and business efficiencies in the wake of its separation from Fairfax.

APRIL 5, 2018
Blitz Publications goes into liquidation
Blitz Publications and Multimedia Group, which publishes Women’s Health and Fitness, Nourish, Australian Natural Health, Muse, Gluten-Free Heaven, Natural Vegan and Blitz Martial Arts Magazine has gone into liquidation on March 1. As a result all magazines have ceased publishing.

FEBRUARY 29, 2018
Seven cuts jobs at Broadcast Centre ahead of new plan with Nine – TV Tonight
Around 150 staff yesterday at Broadcast Centre Melbourne were told by Seven management that most of their jobs will be outsourced by 2019.

FEBRUARY 15, 2018
Yahoo7 cuts, including head of TV Homaira Razi, exit in Yahoo7 cuts
Homaira Razi, head of TV at Yahoo7, and up to eight full-time staff in the TV team have lost their jobs off the back of Yahoo7’s restructure last week.

APRIL 30, 2018
ABC to axe 20 metro newsroom jobs in restructure
The ABC will axe approximately 20 jobs in its eight capital city newsrooms to adapt to the ‘modern media environment’.

JUNE 5, 2018
AAP to cut up to 25 positions as demand for services reduces
Australian Associated Press (AAP) has launched a voluntary redundancy program – with between 20 and 25 positions to be cut – as the wire service contends with reduced market demand.

JUNE 5, 2018
Pacific Magazines confirms six jobs to go in latest restructure
Pacific Magazines has restructured. Who and New Idea’s editorial teams, with six positions – or three full-time roles – to be axed.

AUGUST 9, 2018
Five community newspapers shut in Perth
The Canberra Times reports that Perth’s Community Newspaper Group have announced the closure of five of its 17 newspapers. The Comment News, The Advocate, Hills and Avon Valley Gazette, Midland-Kalamunda Reporter and the North Coast Times will be delivered for the last time during the week beginning September 3.

SEPTEMBER 14, 2018
News Corp axes more editorial roles as it continues to cut costs
News Corp has axed a number of editorial roles across mastheads. The Australian, Herald Sun and Daily Telegraph.