



**STATEMENT OF DAVID KIRK
PRESS FREEDOM MEDIA CONFERENCE
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Australians from all walks of life are concerned about our country's security. And everyone works hard for our prosperity.

But it is our freedoms that are most precious, and require constant vigilance.

Over the past several years, step by step, in ways large and small, the freedom of the press in Australia has been circumscribed:

Anti terrorism laws.

Sedition laws.

Suppression orders.

Erosion of freedom of information requests.

Contempt proceedings in the courts and Parliament.

As publishers and media companies, we have fought them separately, and in ad hoc coalitions.

It is time that we join together in a concerted effort to promote, preserve, protect and defend the freedom of the press in Australia.

I believe it is significant that we came together so quickly to form this coalition. It took little persuasion. The need was obvious.

Ours is a strong, united and determined coalition.

Our efforts will be directed both in Canberra and with the community at large – to educate the public about these issues, and the vital stake they have in them as well.

Freedom of the press is indispensable to the operation of democracy.

This is a proud moment for us, and we will take these issues forward.