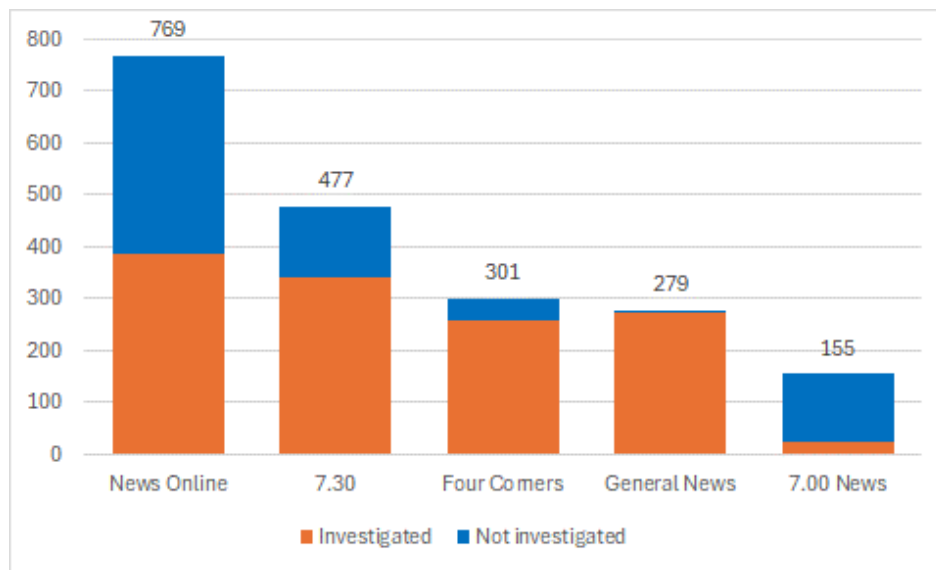


4 September 2024

Mid-year ABC Ombudsman Report Reflects International Themes

In the January to June 2024 ABC Ombudsman midyear update, international themes dominate. The Israel/Gaza war (the war) represented 24% of all complaints over this period. Coverage of India and Indian politics represented 10% of complaints while the Four Corners episode *Ukraine's War: The Other Side* attracted a further 8% of complaints.

The top five most complained about programs or platforms are represented below:



- 30% of News Online complaints were about the war with almost one-third of these (67) concerned about the use of the phrase “a show of resilience” as explained in the investigation report [here](#).
- Across television, radio and online 275 complaints recorded in general news were about the opening of a Hindu temple by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi raising concerns about accuracy and investigated [here](#).
- 255 complaints related to the Four Corners program *Ukraine's War: The Other Side* alleging pro-Russia propaganda and discussed [here](#).
- 53% of the 7.30 complaints (253) related to a testing interview with the Shadow Energy Minister (considered by the Ombudsman as suitably rigorous and informative), while 11% were claims of anti-Israel bias in an interview with an IDF spokesperson investigated [here](#).

The majority of complaints about the war concerned bias or lack of balance with 35% suggesting content was pro-Israel and 63% concluding pro-Palestine (2% other). Over the 6-months, no breaches of ABC editorial standards were found in the war coverage. 105 issues were resolved where the Ombudsman's Office determined appropriate action was taken – 92 of these related to an ABC News TikTok video (more information [here](#)).

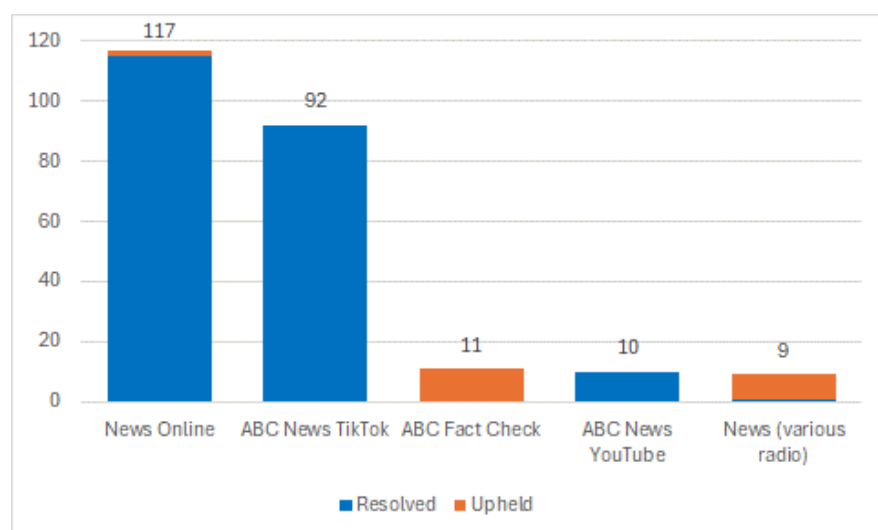
In terms of overall numbers, general complaints (broad concerns such as taste, preference and scheduling) were down on the same time last year (accounted for by nearly 2000 complaints about ‘poor coverage’ of the Coronation of King Charles III received in 2023) while specific content complaints increased given the commencement of the war.

Complaints	Jan-Jun 23	%	Jan-Jun 24	%
Total¹	11,395		11,560	
General	9,936	87%	8,283	72%
Content	1,459	13%	3,277	28%
Content complaint issues²				
Investigated	1,482		3,334	
Not upheld	535	36%	1,879	56%
Resolved	415	78%	1,609	86%
Upheld	78	15%	243	13%
Upheld	42	8%	27	1%

¹ The number of single complaints (may contain more than one issue)

² The number of issues identified in content complaints

270 complaint issues were either resolved (243) or upheld (27) as a result of an Ombudsman investigation.



- 65 of the News Online resolved issues related to complaints that an article about a murdered British transgender teen was harmful and offensive in that it identified her by an incorrect name, thereby ‘deadnaming’ her (see [here](#).)
- All of the ABC News TikTok resolved issues related to a video that profiled a supporter of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement in Sydney (Investigation report [here](#)).
- The 11 upheld complaints related to a fact check of an assertion by Dick Smith that no country has ever been able to run entirely on renewables. The Report is available [here](#).
- A profile of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on ABC News YouTube incorrectly implied that India’s original constitution included the word ‘secular’. An Editor’s Note was added to the online video and an [online correction](#) posted.
- Eight issues were upheld in relation to reports about the NSW State government’s aerial cull of wild horses in the Kosciuszko National Park (report [here](#)).

Summaries of all complaints upheld or resolved are published [here](#) and [here](#). Full Investigation Reports of significant matters are published [here](#). A full year comprehensive report for the 2024 calendar year will be published early in the New Year.