

TRMC joins Australian Made in a united call on government to print locally.

For immediate release

The Real Media Collective, the industry association representing the paper, print, publishing, mail and distribution industries, has launched a communication campaign to government and announced alliance with the Australian Made campaign.

From the COVID-19 pandemic there has been repeated calls from trade unions and industry bodies to government to produce all government print work in Australia. TRMC have supported the sentiment, however has been working in the background to develop a solution that could assist government to implement new procurement guidelines.

“We reviewed the figures and analysed statements from various stakeholders, however we could not find the numbers to marry with the government data that we were reviewing. Ibisworld reports \$340M of print work is off-shored annually, however when we broke this figure down through our Industry Insights surveying, we quickly determined this was a combination of publishing, noting cook-books made up a large majority of off-shore book publishing, signage, including a double digit percentage of fabric flags, and a smaller percentage of some government print work,” commented Kellie Northwood, CEO, The Real Media Collective.

From the Industry Insights surveying, TRMC then reviewed government guidelines which highlight priority for Australian companies, environmental and ethical procurement. However, when exploring the major government print contracts, it was determined that the majority sit with print management contractual agreements and it is in this realm that the data is difficult to report without breaching confidentiality conditions.

“Government departments prefer to share the government print work across many organisations, and thus the print management modelling is more common than direct print company contracts. Print management groups also offer single supply management and standardised reporting. However, once the print manager is selected, it has been found that the government procurement departments may not be specifying or rating higher for the products to be produced in Australia, rather the contract KPIs lean more closely to cost reduction targets. As an industry we know that the estimated cost is not the only measure to which government should be assessing. Freight, environment, modern anti-slavery legislation and related responsibilities, ethical business practices and more have an economic cost and social impact on Australia. Governments at all levels should include these factors into their entire procurement formulas and ultimate reporting regardless of whether adopting a print management or direct commercial print model.” commented Northwood.

To gain greater insight, provide information and lead the industry discussions, TRMC has written to all government Ministers, federal, state and local, highlighting the concerns of industry, the impact to Australian jobs, the environment and ethical sourcing.

“During this year we have seen government and businesses affected by supply chain issues. If governments at all levels consider the benefits of implementing our proposals, they would create an agile sourcing and procurement model, that would minimise any future supply chain disruptions.

This would bring about economic benefits, savings and efficiencies to government and the overall Australian economy.” commented Northwood.

“In addition to our communication campaign with government we have built facts sheets highlighting our industry’s environmental, social inclusion and ethical sourcing credentials as well as highlighting the effectiveness of print to maintain print volumes across government as a truly effective way to communicate with all citizens,” furthered Northwood.

TRMC have taken their stance on lobbying for Australian manufacturing further through an association partnership with the Australian Made campaign which promotes the Australian Made logo and is running an Australian Manufacturing campaign nationally.

Australian Mad Campaign Associates are membership organisations, industry groups and other cooperatives that provide support and leadership to Australia’s growers and manufacturers. Campaign Associates leverage their relationship with the Australian Made, Australian Grown logo to strengthen ties with their membership and local industry, and improve access to country-of-origin branding resources.

“We considered developing our own campaign, however we looked to how well recognised the Australian Made brand is and wanted to bring our members into a strong campaign that was well-established. We will be promoting the Australian Made brand, workshops, information and tips to all our members in the new year and are thrilled to be an industry association partner with such a well-revered organisation. We have also aligned our position with government to the philosophy and purpose of Australian Made to ensure government is hearing consistency from industry and industry recognised campaigns such as this,” concluded Northwood.

For more information please contact the Collective on hello@thermc.com.au for more assistance.

Kellie Northwood is the Chief Executive Officer of The Real Media Collective, an industry association representing the paper, print, publishing, mail and distribution sectors across the Australian and New Zealand landscape.

Northwood also holds the Executive position for the Australasian Paper Industry Association (APIA).

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